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The Honour of Wallingford, 1066-1300

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THE HONOUR OF WALLINGFORD, 1066-1300

by

Christopher David Tilley

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

King's College,
University of London
2011

Abstract

The honour of Wallingford was the great lordship centred on the castle of Wallingford on the bank of the River Thames in the English county of Berkshire that dominated the southern midland region as an important centre of power. Famous in English constitutional history for its unique mention in King Henry II's Assize of Clarendon of 1166, and as one of the only baronial lordships mentioned by name in Magna Carta, this thesis is the first full study of this important institution, and explores the reasons for its prominence primarily through English royal records preserved in the Public Record Office, and private charters that survive in the cartularies of religious houses, but also drawing on narrative, topographical and archaeological evidence.

The thesis contributes to current scholarship in a number of areas. The model of the 'feudal honour' has long been central to historians' understanding of English political history, and the honour of Wallingford was in many ways a perfect representation of 'feudal society'. In light of important recent challenges to the concepts of 'feudalism' and 'feudal society', as well as work on the origins of 'bastard feudalism', this study allows a re-examination of the ways in which post-Conquest political, social, legal and tenurial relations actually operated in society. This allows for a fresh perspective on the impact of the Norman Conquest, the nature and significance of tenurial ties to the social and political organisation of England, the changing ways in which power was mediated in the localities over the period, and the development of the English state. Related to this, the study also focuses on the knightly tenants of the honour, building up a picture of the social, political, economic and cultural circumstances of families over a long period, which were part of a social group of great historical significance.

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Note on Systems of Reference

Printed primary sources are cited in the footnotes by an abbreviated form of the title of the volume in which they are published. Full details of printed and unprinted primary sources, and abbreviations used, are given in the Bibliography. Secondary sources are cited by the surname of the author and a short form of the title, italicised in the case of books, and in inverted commas in the case of articles and single chapters of books. Domesday Book is cited by the folio number in Great Domesday. Anglo-Saxon charters are cited by the number assigned to them in P.H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 8 (London, 1968), revised edition, ed. S.E. Kelly, abbreviated as S.

INTRODUCTION

‘And let there be no one, within his castle or without his castle, nor even in the honour of Wallingford, who shall forbid the sheriffs to enter into his court or his land’.¹

The ‘honour of Wallingford’ is a phrase that appears in two of the most famous documents in English constitutional history. The Assize of Clarendon of 1166, King Henry II’s provisions establishing the crown’s exclusive jurisdiction over criminal law, makes explicit provision for it while apparently treating the rest of England as a single political unit. It is also mentioned by name in the text of Magna Carta, issued by King John in 1215.² A host of other less well known administrative documents also make passing mention of it.

The term ‘honour of Wallingford’ refers to the lands and jurisdiction that pertained to the castle at Wallingford on the Berkshire bank of the River Thames approximately half-way between Oxford and Reading. It consisted of more than 100 manors, all within a fifty mile radius, in nine contiguous counties: Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Middlesex, Bedfordshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire, and Worcestershire.³ Despite its relatively compact nature, the honour had no blocks of territory; rather it was made up of lands scattered amongst those of other landholders. Sometimes its manors encompassed whole rural settlements

¹ Extract from the Assize of Clarendon, Stubbs, *Select Charters*, p. 144, cap. 9: *Et non sit aliquis infra castellum vel extra castellum, nec etiam in honore Walingeford, qui vetet vicecomites intrare in curiam vel terram suam ad videndos francos plegios, et quod omnes sint sub plegiis: et ante vicecomites mittantur sub libero plegio*; and clause 11: *Et nulli sint in civitate vel burgo vel castello vel extra, nec in honore etiam de Walingeford, qui vetent vicecomites intrare in terram suam vel socam suam, ad capiendum illos qui rettati fuerint vel publicati quod sint robatores vel murdratores vel latrones vel receptores, eorum, vel utlagati vel rettati deforesta; sed praecipit quod juvent illos ad capiendum eos*. Translation from, *Select historical documents*, ed. Henderson, p. 18.

² Holt, *Magna Carta*, p. 462, cap. 43.

³ See map in Appendix 6.

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(identified by royal government as vills), but in many cases the land of the honour was one interest among several within a single vill. Most of its lands were within a thirty-mile radius of Wallingford castle, primarily in southern Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, with smaller concentrations in Berkshire, Wiltshire and Middlesex. The Oxfordshire and Aylesbury plains and Chiltern hills in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire were the locations of most of the manors, which straddled two geographical features: the Thames, and the pre-historic Ridgeway that stretched from Marlborough in Wiltshire to East Anglia, crossing the Thames close to Wallingford and running along the edge of the Chilterns. The road between Oxford and London was also significant with commercial centres, at the honour's manors of High Wycombe and Uxbridge, developing from the twelfth century. Most of the honour's manors, by the mid-twelfth century, were held by tenants in return for specified quotas of knight service. In addition to being a landed estate, the honour was thus a network of military tenants. It appears to have been a creation of the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 and in many ways resembles the archetypal 'feudal honour' portrayed by Sir Frank Stenton in his seminal Ford Lectures of 1929.⁴ Stenton described how after the Conquest, King William I granted great 'honours', alternatively called 'fiefs' or 'baronies', to his leading barons, who in turn granted lands to their own barons in return for knight service. Stenton argued that the tenants holding of these honours formed largely self-contained aristocratic communities and that at their peak, in the early twelfth century, each of these lordships resembled 'a feudal state in miniature'.⁵

⁴ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 41-113.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

INTRODUCTION

The honour of Wallingford has received no full-scale study. Its prominence in the sources, however, has meant that many historians cite it as an example of an English 'honour' or 'barony'.⁶ W.O. Ault devoted a chapter of his 1923 study of *Private Jurisdiction* to the honour of Wallingford, which he used, along with a number of other jurisdictions of the period, to compare with the results of his detailed analysis of the Ramsey Abbey court rolls.⁷ H.E. Salter included a brief history of each of the honour's fees down to 1300 as an appendix to his 1930 edition of the *Boarstall Cartulary*.⁸ More recently, Katherine Keats-Rohan has published a number of studies relating to the honour's early history, focussing on the honour's origins and formation before and after the Conquest, the conclusions of which are re-examined in the first chapter of this thesis.⁹

The town of Wallingford, an Anglo-Saxon royal *burh* that has retained much of its street plan, was a distinct but related entity, and has received more attention than the honour. J.K. Hedges produced a two-volume *History of Wallingford from the Invasion of Caesar to the Present Time* in 1881, while N.M. Herbert has undertaken extensive research into the borough of Wallingford in the period 1155-1400, drawing on the borough's archives.¹⁰ The town and castle have been the subject of much attention from archaeologists in recent years with the ongoing 'Wallingford *Burh* to Borough Project'.¹¹ The town of Wallingford will be considered here in relation to the honour, but is not the primary focus of the present study.

⁶ For example: Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, p.219; Crouch, *Birth*, p. 281, following Stenton, *First Century*, p. 59. Painter, *English Feudal Barony*, makes frequent reference to the honour of Wallingford.

⁷ Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 224-232.

⁸ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 295-327.

⁹ Keats-Rohan, 'Devolution of the honour of Wallingford', pp. 311-313; Keats-Rohan, 'The Making of Henry of Oxford', pp. 287-309; Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 52-67.

¹⁰ Hedges, *History of Wallingford*; Herbert, 'The Borough of Wallingford, 1155-1400'. For

¹¹ See, Keats-Rohan and Roffe (ed.), *The Origins of the Borough of Wallingford* (BAR British Series, 2009).

INTRODUCTION

The present thesis is the first full investigation into the honour of Wallingford from 1066 to 1300. It has three main objectives. First, it explores the formation and descent of the honour during this period; considering how the honour came together in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, and how it was finally assembled in its later form under Miles Crispin in the early twelfth century, after which it passed to Brian fitzCount who died without heirs before 1150. For most of the period 1154-1231, the honour was held by the crown, apart from the short time between 1189 and 1194 when John, count of Poitou received it as part of his appanage from his brother King Richard. In 1231, King Henry III granted the honour to his brother, Richard, earl of Cornwall, to whose son and heir, Edmund, it passed on Richard's death in 1272. The terminal date for this study is 1299/1300, the year in which Edmund died without heirs and the honour was once again taken into royal hands.

Secondly, the thesis examines the composition and structure of the honour across the period, asking what the honour consisted of, and what its significance was. The process of enfeoffment of tenants, the nature of tenants' fees, and the existence of an honorial community are investigated. The honour of Wallingford was also a 'liberty', separated in certain ways from the procedures of royal government. The honour was unusual in combining seigneurial jurisdiction over scattered manors on the one hand, and the royal franchisal jurisdiction of a liberty on the other. Both the nature of the honour's jurisdiction and its consequences are important themes.

The third objective of this study is to explore and develop some of the major themes in the historiography of aristocratic society between 1066 and 1300. The fact the honour was held by the crown for such a long time makes its tenants an especially

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interesting group of minor landholders to use to study the emergence of what has been called the 'gentry' or the 'knightly class'. Wallingford tenants were directly connected with the crown from 1154 until 1231; a time when historians have seen the knightly class undergoing significant development. In the late twelfth and thirteenth century, such people were increasingly brought within the scope of royal government while their involvement in national politics was becoming ever more pronounced. These developments were accompanied by significant social and cultural change. The tenants of the honour of Wallingford; their lands, careers, social connections, political activity and life style; thus provide a prosopographical case study from which to investigate the changes that took place in this period.

Chapter 1 examines the formation of the honour between the Norman invasion of 1066 and Miles Crispin's death in c.1107. The pre-Conquest holders of the honour's lands are identified through an analysis of Domesday Book and the evidence of charters and chronicles. This is then used as a basis from which to explore the process of conquest and colonisation. Katherine Keats-Rohan's recent work sees the honour as an example of the descent of property from an Anglo-Saxon family to a Norman one, through the marriage of Eadgyth, daughter of Wigod of Wallingford to Robert d'Oilly. Chapter 1 argues that there is much to be said for this interpretation but that the importance of other possible explanations for the the transfer of lands to Norman lords after 1066 must also be considered. It then considers the process by which Miles Crispin, lord of Wallingford, accumulated portions of the lands of Robert d'Oilly and Roger of Montgomery in the decades after 1086, which as Keats-Rohan argues, was closely related to pre-Conquest conditions. The honour provides an interesting case study of the process

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of Conquest, the survival of an influential Englishman and his family, and the role of royal patronage.

The themes of inheritance and patronage are the focus of Chapter 2, which deals with the descent of the honour in the early twelfth century and explores the interplay between royal patronage and inheritance that is evident in the actions of the king and in the attitudes of Brian fitzCount and his wife, Matilda of Wallingford. The Wallingford evidence helps to contribute to the debates on the extent of the king's power to control the descent of aristocratic estates, the methods of patronage employed by the crown, and the significance of women's property rights. These are central to understanding both the reign of Henry I and the troubles of Stephen's reign, in which Brian fitzCount and Wallingford played such a prominent role.

Chapter 3 turns to the internal structure of the honour between 1066 and 1166 and examines the origins of the tenants and the nature of their holdings, shedding light on the continuing process of colonisation below the level of tenant-in-chief after 1086. The nature of the honour during the century after 1066 is considered. The limited evidence relating to tenants in this period nevertheless allows light to be shed on the structures of magnate power before 1166, and the question of how far there was an honorial community in existence among the tenants of the honour.

Chapter 4 examines the honour's administration between 1154 and 1300 when the increasing abundance of royal records reveal ever more of the internal workings of the honour. The chapter first considers the honour's relationship with royal government and explores what historians have called 'franchisal' jurisdiction. The honour of Wallingford was an area of royal jurisdiction and thus illuminates a great deal about the working of

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royal government and the role of ‘liberties’ and ‘private jurisdiction’ in England during a period in which royal power and government bureaucracy were growing; a subject that has begun to be reassessed by historians after a long period of neglect. The second part of chapter 4 investigates the internal administration of the honour, specifically its honour court and the role of the steward and bailiffs of the honour. Investigating the formal structures of the honour during this period when honours have been said to have declined in importance provides an interesting perspective from which to view the continued existence of an honour in the thirteenth century.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus primarily on the tenants of the honour in the period 1154-1300, the majority of whom were lords of between one and five manors and who were part of a social group that was coming to increasing political and social prominence in the thirteenth century. Chapter 5 investigates the decline in the numbers of knights and considers the debates about the transformation of the knightly class, looking at their economic fortunes, the adoption by substantial local knights of the trappings and life style of the aristocracy. It also addresses the military role of knightly tenants across the thirteenth century and their involvement in local government. Chapter 6 explores the social and political connections of tenants of the honour, considering the importance of honorial identity in this later period, the significance of ties of lordship between the earls of Cornwall and the tenants of the honour, and ties of community between tenants. It also examines the many ties that tenants had that were not related to the honour, including their links with their households, the parish and the immediate neighbourhood, local towns, and other, broader horizons. The chapter then looks at the involvement of tenants of the honour in politics during the thirteenth century, focussing particularly on

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the relationship between the tenants of the honour and King John and their involvement in the Magna Carta rebellion of 1215-1217, but also considering the evidence relating to their participation in the politics of the period 1258-1267. Finally, a brief discussion of how the evidence of the honour of Wallingford helps to illuminate the origins of the 'gentry' concludes the last chapter.

1 THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF THE HONOUR TO 1107

The honour of Wallingford had its origins in the Norman Conquest, one result of which was the dramatic change in personnel revealed in the Domesday Survey of 1086, twenty-years after the invasion. The Old English elite were, with a few notable exceptions, replaced by men of Continental origin. This chapter identifies the pre-Conquest holders of the lands that eventually formed the honour, and examines the creation of the honour in the years after 1066, illuminating the process of conquest and colonisation that took place in this period.

The honour's origins have been the subject of a recent article by Katherine Keats-Rohan, who has argued that the honour was substantially formed before 1066 out of royal ministerial lands that were appurtenant to the office of staller, often translated as 'constable'.¹ Stallers, a kind of military governor, were responsible for the the defence of a region consisting of several shires and may have been introduced under the Danish regime of Cnut following his 1016 conquest of England. Wigod of Wallingford, she argues, is likely to have been one such staller, who was responsible for the defence of the Thames valley region, and commanded a garrison of housecarls based at Wallingford. Wigod, she argues, survived the Conquest with his lands intact, and married his daughter, Eadgyth, to the Norman, Robert d'Oilly. Their daughter married Miles Crispin who eventually succeeded to all the lands connected to Wigod in 1066, though not by the time of Domesday, which records these lands divided between Robert d'Oilly and Miles Crispin.

¹ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 52-67.

THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF THE HONOUR TO 1107

This chapter re-examines Keats-Rohan's hypothesis, arguing that while there was indeed probably a significant level of continuity before and after the Conquest, greater attention must be paid to the changes in the aftermath of the Norman invasion. The first part systematically identifies the individuals who held the lands of the honour before 1066, while the second part considers the process by which land was transferred to the Normans and the factors that contributed to the formation of the honour of Wallingford as it came to be constituted in the twelfth century.

1.1 ANGLO-SAXON LANDHOLDERS

Two individuals most prominent in what is known of the history of Wallingford from Domesday and other evidence are Wigod of Wallingford and Beorhtric. The following two sections will identify these two individuals, before the third looks at other pre-Conquest holders of land that was to become part of the honour.

1.1.1 Wigod

Wigod or Vigot stands out as the central figure in the creation of the honour of Wallingford in the Conquest period. Despite only holding, between himself, his family and his men, property worth sixteen percent of the early twelfth-century honour's value,² Wigod's pre-eminence in the history of Wallingford comes across in many ways. Wigod, unusually among the English aristocracy, appears to have survived the Norman Conquest. He had some connection, as the toponymic part of his name suggests, to the royal

² Calculated according to TRW values in Domesday Book.

borough of Wallingford, whose castle became the *caput* of the honour. His Domesday estates, though amounting to only a small part of the total, nevertheless cover the full geographical range of the honour. Lastly, his significance was felt for many decades after the Conquest through his descendants and kinsmen, who maintained an involvement with the honour's affairs into the twelfth century.³

Apart from the extensive Domesday evidence, very little is known of Wigod. He was described as *Wigodus oppidanorum Walingafordensium dominus* by the twelfth century author of the *Historia Ecclesie Abbendonensis*, who uses the form *Milo de Walingaford cognomento Crispinus*, to describe Miles Crispin in 1084.⁴ Precisely what Wigod's designation means is not clear, as Wallingford was an important royal centre before 1066. It was recorded in Domesday Book ahead of the Berkshire *Terra Regis*, in the position normally reserved for the county town.⁵ Wallingford contained property held by the king and a number of significant post-Conquest tenants-in-chief. Miles Crispin is described as holding fifteen acres in the town, which King Edward had held and where the housecarls dwelt (*Rex Edwardus habuit .xv. acras in quibus manebant huscarles*), the entry adding that it is not known how he came to hold them. Miles also held forty-five messuages and six closes which belonged to six Oxfordshire manors of the honour. Wigod is not mentioned at all in the Domesday description of Wallingford, and is mentioned in connection with only two manors in Berkshire. It is from Buckinghamshire

³ The Harpsden family who held three fees of the honour in 1300 were probably descendants of Wigod's nephew, Alfred.

⁴ *Historia*, i, p. 214; ii, pp. 16-18.

⁵ GDB, fol. 56.

Domesday that the name ‘Wigod of Wallingford’ is most used, elsewhere he is simply styled ‘Wigod’.⁶

In a writ of King Edward the Confessor addressed to Bishop Wulfsgie, Earl Gyrth and the thegns of Oxfordshire, datable to 1058x1066, Wigod is described as the king’s kinsman and his representative.⁷ Elsewhere, the name Wigod appears in the witness lists of five charters of the 1060s issued by Edward the Confessor. In these he is twice described as the king’s ‘butler’ (*pincerna*).⁸ These mentions, together with his connection with a royal borough, suggest that he was a royal official of some sort.

Several factors point to the possibility that Wigod had a military role in the pre-Conquest period, as Keats-Rohan has suggested. The reference to the presence of a garrison at Wallingford where housecarls lived, which could be the same as the fifteen acres Miles Crispin held in 1086, in connection with the writ already mentioned, could imply that Wigod’s association with Wallingford lay with his being in command of a garrison of housecarls. Lawson has suggested the housecarls, a category of private troops, first appeared in the reign of Cnut, and that a large proportion of them mentioned in Domesday Book have names of Scandinavian origin, as does Wigod, while Keats-Rohan has found a number of tenants connected with the honour in this period to have had Scandinavian names, or to have been housecarls, or connected to them.⁹ Lawson argues that the role of the housecarls at Wallingford was not only to control and protect the town but also to enforce the authority of royal officials in the surrounding area. The distribution of Wigod’s estates around strategically significant parts of the country, along

⁶ GDB, fol. 150; Hooper, ‘An Introduction to the Berkshire Domesday’.

⁷ S 1148; *Anglo-Saxon Writs*, no. 104; Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iii, p. 768.

⁸ Keynes, *Atlas of Attestations of Anglo-Saxon Charters*, Table 75; S 1030, 1036, 1041, 1042, 1148.

⁹ Lawson, *Cnut*, pp. 179-80; Keats-Rohan, ‘Genesis’, p. 56.

the Thames, and the Ridgeway, together with his Scandinavian name point to the possibility that he owed his position to his involvement with this kind of arrangement of royal government. Wallingford was of great significance before 1066, evidenced by its allocation of 2400 hides in the Burghal Hidage, Winchester being the only other burgh to have such an allocation.¹⁰

Keats-Rohan has taken this hypothesis further and suggested that Wigod should be associated with the office of Staller or constable that appears for the first time in the eleventh century and which seems to have involved military command, on the king's behalf, of a region larger than a county.¹¹ She argues that Robert d'Oilly has been identified as sheriff of Oxfordshire by the evidence of a writ of King William I ordering him to act in relation to lands of Abingdon Abbey in Oxfordshire and Berkshire, and that a writ of King Edward ordering Wigod to transfer land in Oxfordshire to Westminster, suggests Wigod may have preceded Robert as sheriff of Oxfordshire. She suggests that the writs may show that both Robert and Wigod exercised a wider ministry in the region, as staller. Ansgar the Staller who admitted King William to London in 1066 and whose successor, Geoffrey de Mandeville was constable of London, is an example of an individual holding the office, which in the reign of Edward was connected with the royal household and had responsibility for royal lands over a broader area than a sheriff. As Keats-Rohan points out, it may be noteworthy that Brian fitzCount was styled *constabularius* in two royal charters of the 1130s.¹² If Wigod were a staller, based at the royal centre of Wallingford, this would explain the reason for his wide ranging interests

¹⁰ Roffe, 'Wallingford in Domesday', p. 41; Campbell, 'Some Agents and Agencies of the Late Anglo-Saxon State', p. 204.

¹¹ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 56-7.

¹² Ibid.; *RRAN*, ii, no. 1688; iii, no. 944.

that spread beyond a single county, as well his relationship to Wallingford and to the king.

Identifying Wigod of Wallingford in Domesday Book

Wigod's landed wealth was substantial. With between 136 and 218 hides in as many as nine counties, he was much less wealthy than the earls and many of his non-ducal contemporaries, but was still one of the wealthiest magnates in England. Clarke places him twenty-seventh in his list of the ninety wealthiest pre-Conquest individuals below the rank of earl.¹³ Domesday evidence is notoriously difficult to interpret. Whether every use of the name 'Wigod' refers to the same person, and whether or not they are identical with Wigod of Wallingford, cannot be established with any certainty. Using the methodology discussed by C.P. Lewis and set out by S. Baxter in 'The Death of Burgheard Son of Ælfgar and its Context' it is possible to balance the probabilities by looking for certain factors that suggest a link.¹⁴ The questions to be asked when identifying people in Domesday, are:

1. How common is the name?
2. Is the person identified using by-names or titles?
3. To whom were they connected through bonds of lordship?
4. Did the estates pass to one or several 'successors' between 1066 and 1086?
5. Were these estates geographically concentrated?
6. Were the estates similar in size?

¹³ Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 36.

¹⁴ Lewis, 'Joining the Dots', pp. 69-87; Baxter, 'The Death of Burgheard Son of Ælfgar', pp. 275, 284.

By asking these questions of the evidence it is possible to determine the most probable extent of Wigod of Wallingford's property. The manors attributed to persons named Wigod in Domesday are listed in Appendix 1.

How common is the name? The name 'Wigod' or 'Vigot' is of Scandinavian origin and relatively uncommon in Domesday, appearing in thirty-six entries. It can be established with some confidence that the great majority of these entries refer to the same man, and that he is Wigod of Wallingford. Indeed, given the name's rarity, it could be that all occurrences of this name relate to one individual.

The name Wigod is accompanied by the toponymic by-name, 'de Walingeforde' only three times, all in the same folio of Buckinghamshire Domesday, and all of these, where Miles Crispin was his successor.¹⁵ Otherwise it usually appears alone, except once in Longner in Shropshire, where the name used is 'Wigot venator regis'.¹⁶ It may be assumed that each of the three occurrences of the name Wigod of Wallingford refer to the same man, who was identical with the lord of the garrison of Wallingford mentioned in the Abingdon Chronicle. It may equally be assumed that other instances of this name also refer to this man. It cannot, based on name alone, however, be assumed that Wigod of Wallingford and Wigod, the huntsman of King Edward are different people.

One of the strongest factors in identifying Wigod, is through his three successors, Miles Crispin, Robert d'Oilly and Earl Roger. A tenorial connection with one of these 1086 tenants-in-chief, given what is known of the family connection, and the fact that Miles and Robert were named successors of Wigod, may be reliably taken to be an indication that they refer to Wigod of Wallingford. Twenty-five of the thirty-six entries

¹⁵ GDB, fol. 150.

¹⁶ GDB, fol. 217.

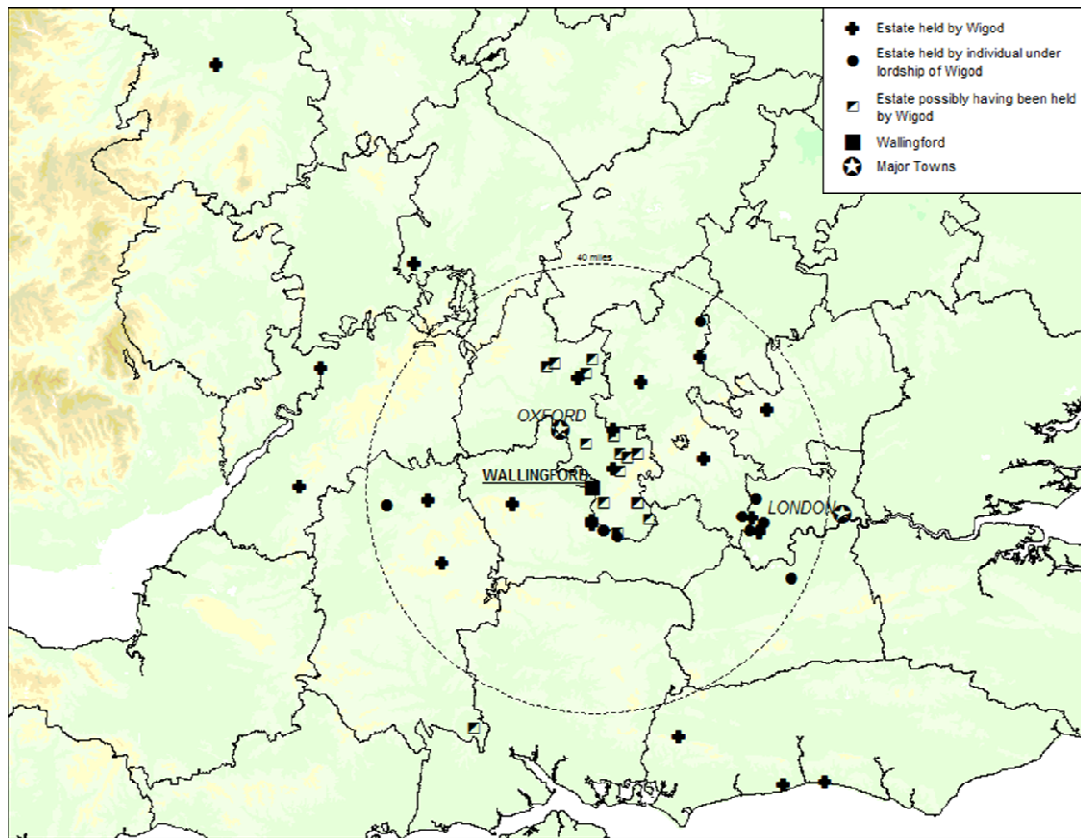
that relate to a Wigod, have a connection with Miles, Robert or Roger, making it highly likely these twenty-five Wigods are the same man. Of the remaining eleven instances of the name, two of them, in the entries for Checkendon and Littlestoke in Oxfordshire, occur in relation to the 1086 tenant-in-chief, Alfred, nephew of Wigod, who as a subtenant of both Earl Roger and Miles Crispin elsewhere, together with his English name, further suggest that these refer to Wigod of Wallingford.

Geography further helps to determine which occurrences of the name can be taken to refer to a single individual (see Figure 1, below). The name Wigod occurs most frequently in the counties of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, suggesting they refer to a single person. Wigod's connection with Wallingford could suggest that the Berkshire references to Wigod are to this individual. There are a number of references to a Wigod in Sussex, in connection with Bepton, Broadwater and Aldrington on the south coast. These manors passed to Earl Roger, William de Braose and William de Warenne respectively, but an entry in the Hampshire Domesday goes some way towards linking this to Wigod of Wallingford. Alwine White is described as holding 2 hides in Hampshire under Miles, which he had held *TRE* under the protection of Wigod, who had received it in exchange for Broadwater in Sussex.¹⁷ The exchange appears to have taken place after the Conquest and was perhaps compensation when the Sussex rapes were created.¹⁸

¹⁷ GDB, fol. 50v.

¹⁸ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', p. 58. For the creation of the Sussex rapes, see Mason, *William the First and the Sussex Rapes*.

Figure 1. Map of the estates connected to Wigod of Wallingford



Patterns of lordship and family also serve to identify Wigod. His family maintained and possibly enhanced its position in English society after the Conquest, and it is quite likely that he retained his governmental responsibilities in Wallingford until his death. A man in this position, especially a member of the pre-Conquest aristocracy like Wigod, may have been especially well-placed to attract a large number of Englishmen in the aftermath of the Conquest.¹⁹ A Hertfordshire sokeman, having paid King William nine ounces of gold to keep his one hide of land in Tiscott in Tring, then turned to Wigod, to whom he had no previous connection, for protection.²⁰ It is highly likely that this

¹⁹ Abels, 'Sheriffs, Lord-Seeking and the Norman Settlement', pp. 29-30.

²⁰ GDB, fol. 137v.

reference to Wigod refers to Wigod of Wallingford, as an important local magnate still capable after the Conquest, of providing protection.

Where the name Wigod is used in association with one of his known commended men or relatives, it can be said with some confidence that this was the same person. A name associated with that of Wigod throughout Domesday is Alwine. Alwine White is described as holding land in Hampshire under the protection of Wigod, and was a tenant of Miles Crispin in 1086 for two hides in Hampshire.²¹ The name Alwine occurs in two other places in association with Wigod. In Little Missendon, Buckinghamshire, and Redbourn, Hertfordshire, an Alwine held land *TRE*, both of which entries name the 1086 subtenant as 'Wigod'.²² Alwine was a common name,²³ and each of these Alwines had a different by-name: in addition to Alwine White in Hampshire, one was called Alwine the hunter (*venator*) in Redbourn; while the other, in Little Missendon, was a man of Sigeræd son of Sibi. They also passed to different tenants-in-chief. Redbourn was held by the bishop of Lisieux and Little Missenden by Robert of Mortain. These appear to refer to different people, but the fact that each had a subtenant named Wigod, and that these estates lay within fifteen miles of a number of Wigod of Wallingford's other estates, could suggest a link, though the evidence is tenuous. Given the rarity of the name, there is a possibility that the Wigod holding as a subtenant in 1086 was Wigod of Wallingford, who had lost the bulk of his lands, but it is also possible that this was another man of the same name, perhaps a kinsman.

²¹ GDB, fol. 50v.

²² GDB, fols. 146, 134v.

²³ Lewis, 'Joining the Dots', p.83.

For the majority of the estates that feature the rare name Wigod, there are a sufficient number of links between them to suggest they do indeed refer to the same person. There are some occurrences of the name for which very little evidence supports their being a reference to Wigod of Wallingford. These are the more isolated manors of Clyst St Mary in Devon, Longner in Shropshire, Nares Gladly in Bedfordshire and Wixford in Warwickshire.²⁴ It is unlikely (though not impossible) that either Clyst St Mary or Longner were held by the same Wigod as Wigod of Wallingford. They have only the name of Wigod in common, and are very small estates, geographically isolated from the rest. Longner consisted of a single hide sixty miles from the nearest other estate held by Wigod, while Clyst St Mary was three vigates more than eighty miles from Wigod of Wallingford's nearest manors.²⁵ On the other hand, these could represent ministerial tenures held by Wigod of Wallingford. This could also be the explanation for the inclusion of the manor of Ogbourne in the later honour. A Wiltshire geld roll and the *Liber Exoniensis* reveal that a Wigod also held land around Ogbourne in Wiltshire, while Ogbourne and nearby Chilton Foliat and Clyffe Pypard were held by Miles Crispin in 1086 having been held by Earl Harold *TRE*.²⁶ These Wiltshire lands were in the country around the royal centre at Marlborough, which together with their being described as Harold's lands in 1066, might suggest they too were ministerial lands of Wigod.

Nares Gladly and Wixford were also some distance from the rest of Wigod's lands. The pre-Conquest holder of Nares Gladly is described as Wigod *venator regis*, the only instance where anything other than *de Walingforde* is appended to the name. It is

²⁴ Clarke includes Clyst St Mary among Wigod's lands, though not the others. Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 356.

²⁵ GDB, fol. 102, fol. 217, fol. 252, fol. 239.

²⁶ Printed in *VCH Wiltshire*, ii, p. 200; GDB, fol. 71.

impossible to say whether or not this is the same person, though Clarke and Freeman have considered them to be different people.²⁷ The different by-name may suggest not, but on the other hand this manor was geographically close to others attributed to Wigod or his men including Wavendon (six miles), Quainton (eleven miles) and Tiscott (ten miles), which have been shown to have much linking them to Wigod of Wallingford. Although by-names are important, Lewis points out that these by-names were used only when the need arose, and that some Anglo-Saxon individuals could have more than one of these used in different parts of the country.²⁸ It may well be that Wigod, the huntsman of the king, and Wigod of Wallingford was the same man.

For Wixford, identification is impossible. It was an estate of five hides, which would fit well with Wigod's manors, the average size of which being seven hides. It was held by the church of Evesham by 1086 and was thirty-five miles from the nearest of Wigod's other estates.²⁹ Merely the fact that it was held by someone named Wigod links it to the rest.

By analysing the connections between individual references to the name Wigod throughout Domesday Book, it is possible to conclude that the majority of the instances of the name refer to the same person, and that he is Wigod of Wallingford, the 'kinsman' of Edward the Confessor who headed the garrison at Wallingford.

Wigod may have held more than just those lands specifically attributed to him in Domesday Book. One clear example of this is the lands of Toki, Wigod's son, in Iver (Buckinghamshire), Brinkworth (Wiltshire) and Ickenham (Middlesex). How far these

²⁷ Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 356; Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, p. 733.

²⁸ Lewis, 'Joining the Dots,' pp. 80-81.

²⁹ GDB, fol. 239.

were Toki's own acquisitions and how far they were from his father, is not known, but they may be numbered among the properties with strong ties to Wigod, along with those of his commended men, already discussed. In Iver there was a close connection, as the Domesday entry states that Robert d'Oilly held this as *de feudo suae feminae*, indicating that it passed to Toki's sister Ealdgyth who married Robert d'Oilly.³⁰

Evidence beyond the Domesday survey reveals the presence of Wigod in connection with one Oxfordshire estate for which Domesday contains no mention of him. The Abingdon Chronicle complains that Wigod took possession of the manor of Whitchurch, which a monk named Leofric had inherited, and which the author believed should have been part of the fee of the church.³¹ The date of this event is not stated and could have been either before or after 1066. Miles Crispin held the manor of Whitchurch as ten hides in 1086 but his predecessors were Leofric and Alwine.³² Alwine, as has been shown, was one of Wigod's men, and Leofric may be the monk of Abingdon. The explanation for this is unknown, but it is possible that Wigod took possession after 1066, illustrating one instance where his presence is concealed by Domesday Book. A number of apparently small landholders were among Miles Crispin's and Robert d'Oilly's predecessors in Oxfordshire, and this one case suggests the possibility that other instances of Wigod's lordship are concealed by the Domesday evidence.

The honour of Wallingford also consisted of a number of manors not attributed to an antecessor. It is possible that many of these were also part of Wigod's estate (see Table 1). Many of Robert d'Oilly's Oxfordshire lands may have been Wigod's. The

³⁰ GDB, fol. 149.

³¹ *Historia*, i, pp. 214-5. See below, p. 58.

³² GDB, fol. 159.

nature of the Domesday evidence in Circuits IV and V, which often lack information about pre-Conquest holders of lands, particularly for Oxfordshire, is such that the names of the vast majority of Robert's predecessors, in his thirty manors, are unknown.³³ It is only in Hook Norton³⁴ and Goring, the two estates with the largest number of hides (thirty and twenty respectively), that any details of the time of King Edward are given. In Hook Norton, the entry states that the estate had been held by three brothers but does not name them, while in Goring, Wigod is named as Robert's antecessor. The fact that Wigod is mentioned at the start of the section on Robert d'Oilly's lands, in the second entry, could imply that Wigod was the former holder of all Robert's estates.³⁵ This would account for up to seventeen additional Oxfordshire manors, all of which were positioned geographically amid Wigod's known estates in south Oxfordshire and the area around Bicester.

At least one of these seventeen manors, however, was only given to Robert in the 1080s. King William gave Ludwell to Robert, as the Domesday entry says, 'at the siege of Sainte-Suzanne' which took place between 1083 and 1086.³⁶ This does not preclude it having belonged to Wigod, as its pre-Conquest owner is unknown, but coming so late to Robert d'Oilly, it did not descend in the same manner as Wigod's other property did to Robert.

Miles Crispin also held lands not attributed by Oxfordshire Domesday to any predecessor, which may also have belonged to Wigod. Harpsden was held of Miles by

³³ Baxter, 'Representation of lordship', pp. 77, 102.

³⁴ Hook Norton with a number of other manors did not become part of the honour of Wallingford, but passed to Robert d'Oilly's nephew, Robert (II) d'Oilly, and remained the *caput* of the d'Oilly honour until the thirteenth century.

³⁵ Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, p. 732; Williams, *The English*, p. 101.

³⁶ GDB, fol. 158v.

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Wigod's nephew, Alfred in 1086, while two men with the English names, Toli and Tovi held Garsington and Nethercote of Miles respectively. It is not possible to establish whether all, some, or none of these lands were Wigod's, but given their geographical position around Wigod's known estates, and his known connection to Robert and Miles, suggests it is possible. This would add a further seventy-six hides to Wigod's total estate.

Table 1. Oxfordshire estates with unknown antecessor possibly attributable to Wigod – these are plotted on map in Figure 1

Vill	Name of 1086 Tenant-in- Chief	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRW value (£)
Bicester	Robert d'Oilly		15.5	16
Drayton'	Robert d'Oilly		10	7
Rousham	Robert d'Oilly	Reginald	3.25	4
Stratton Audley	Robert d'Oilly	Alweard	5	3
Upper Heyford	Robert d'Oilly	Roger de Chesney	10	12
Watlington	Robert d'Oilly		8	10
Wheatfield	Robert d'Oilly	Peter	2	1
Garsington	Miles Crispin	Toli	1	1.0
Harpsden	Miles Crispin	Alfred (nephew of Wigod)	5	5.0
Kingston Blount	Miles Crispin		7	7
Mapledurham	Miles Crispin		3	7
Nethercote	Miles Crispin	Tovi	2	3
Total			71.75	76

1.1.2 Beorhtric

The second principal pre-Conquest owner of what became Wallingford lands was Beorhtric, whose estates made up a similar proportion of the honour to those of Wigod. Interestingly, this man's lands were divided between both Miles and Robert in 1086, just as Wigod's were. Beorhtric was a much more common name than Wigod, and so it is

more difficult to identify him as an individual. Recent scholars have identified two principal Beorhtrics: Beorhtric son of Ælfgar, an English magnate with lands valued at around five-hundred-and-sixty pounds, concentrated in the south-west of England; and Beorhtric the man of Queen Edith, whose lands, together with those of his men, were valued at around £100.³⁷ These two men held property in two distinct areas. Where any form of descriptor is added to their first name, it is ‘son of Ælfgar’ when referring to the West Country estates, and ‘man (or thegn) of Queen Edith’ that is used in the south-midland estates.³⁸ Clarke has identified twenty attestations of a Beorhtric to charters issued between 1042 and 1061, which he suggests could refer to either individual. However, the same name never appears twice, meaning it probably refers to only one person. Although his connection to the queen may have meant our Beorhtric was present at court, the fact that attestations begin before the 1045 marriage of Edith and King Edward, and the much greater wealth of Beorhtric son of Ælfgar, point to the latter being the witness to these charters.³⁹

Identifying Beorhtric in Domesday Book

There are two hundred and sixty instances of the name Beorhtric in Domesday Book, in twenty counties. These references undoubtedly refer to more than one person, but it is impossible to know where the lines between them should be drawn. Again, as with Wigod, connections between these references must be analysed methodically in order to establish the identity of Miles Crispin and Robert d’Oilly’s predecessor, and the estates

³⁷ Clarke, *Englsh Nobility*, pp. 37, 40, 47, 71, 73, 76, 63, 84, 133, 262; Williams, ‘A West-Country Magnate’, pp. 41-68.

³⁸ GDB, fols. 150v; 149b; 149c; 176v; 150a-150b; 136v; 150b.

³⁹ Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 133.

he held. Even more so than was the case for Wigod, for whom there is some evidence outside Domesday Book, it is impossible to be certain of the identity of Beorhtric; the evidence must be weighed and conclusions must rest on probability.

Given the complexity of identifying an individual named Beorhtric, a convenient starting point is the Domesday holdings of Miles Crispin and Robert d'Oilly. Beorhtric, like Wigod, was a common antecessor of both men. Two of Robert d'Oilly's largest estates, Marsworth and High Wycombe, both in Buckinghamshire, had previously been held by Beorhtric, while Miles Crispin held six manors that had been Beorhtric's as well as a further fourteen that had belonged to Beorhtric's men, amounting to twenty in total.⁴⁰

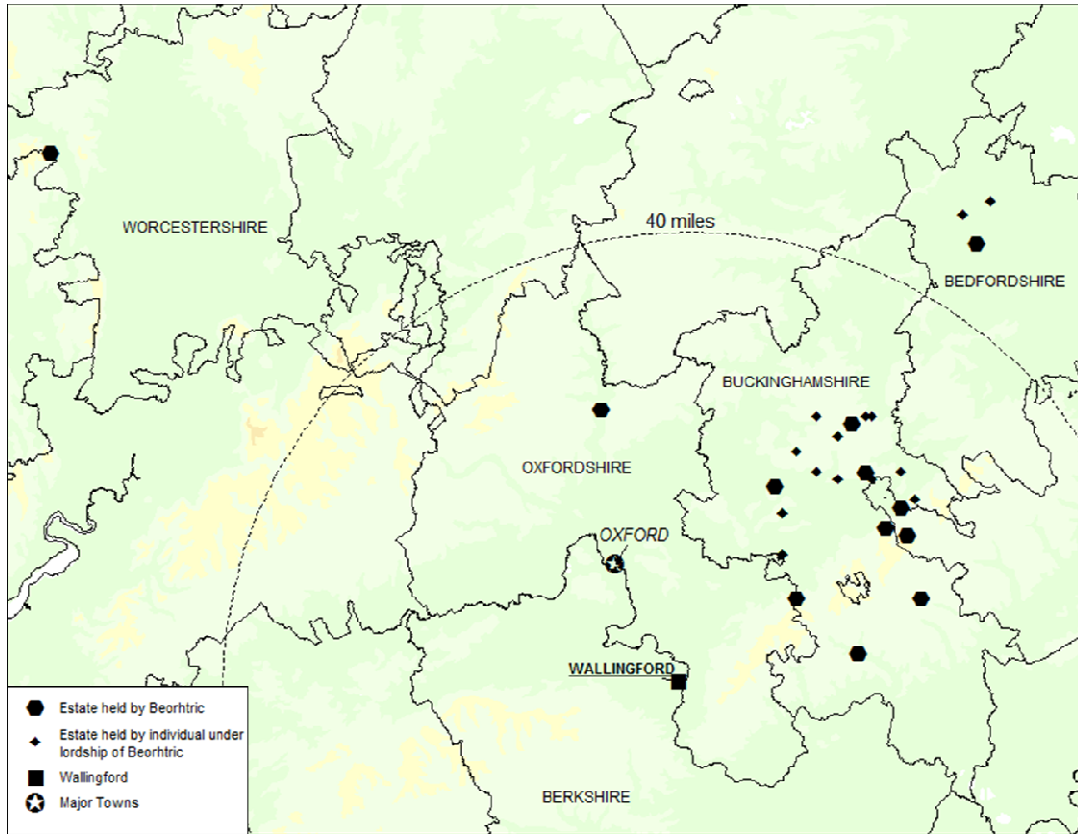
The by-names of these Beorhtrics pose important questions. There are two by-names used here, 'thegn of Queen Edith' and 'thegn of King Edward', and in each reference to an estate Beorhtric held himself, with the exception of Wainhill and Somerton, both in Oxfordshire, one or other of these names is given, while for the men commended to Beorhtric, no by-names are given. Beorhtric the thegn of Queen Edith, and Beorhtric the thegn of King Edward may have been two different people, but neither appellation is restricted to the antecessor of one 1086 tenant-in-chief. Beorhtric the thegn of Queen Edith held Waddesdon, Wingrave and High Wycombe, the first two of which passed to Miles Crispin, the latter to Robert d'Oilly. Meanwhile Beorhtric the thegn of King Edward held Clapham, Stewkley and Marsworth, which followed the same pattern whereby the first two passed to Miles and the latter to Robert. Either we are dealing with two men whose lands passed to (among others) both Miles and Robert, or one man who was known by these two by-names at different times.

⁴⁰ See Appendix 2 for lands of Beorhtric.

Geography would suggest they were more likely to be the same person (see Figure 2). The lands which passed from Beorhtric to Miles and Robert were overwhelmingly in Buckinghamshire (the majority within ten miles of Aylesbury), with only three outside that county, one just over the border in Bedfordshire, and two in Oxfordshire. On the one hand this makes the different names difficult to overlook. While people could be known by different by-names, this was usually in different parts of the country, as was the case with the king's thegn known in Buckinghamshire Domesday as Burgheard of Shenley, but in Suffolk is called Burgheard of Mendlesham.⁴¹ On the other hand, the proximity and intermingling of the estates attributed to the Beorhtrics suggest they may be a single individual.

⁴¹ Baxter, 'The death of Burgheard son of Ælfgar', pp. 275-6; C.P. Lewis, 'Joining the Dots,' p. 81.

Figure 2. Map of the estates connected to Beorhtric, thegn of Queen Edith and King Edward



Turning to lordship, it seems very probable that all of the men of Beorhtric whose Buckinghamshire lands Miles Crispin held in 1086 were men of one individual, as opposed to two (See Appendix 2). These fourteen manors were relatively small holdings only assessed at seventeen hides in total, and in at least five cases, continued to be held by men with English names, with at least three of these being held of Miles by the same person in 1086 as had held *TRE*. This suggests that Miles succeeded to Beorhtric's lands as a result gained a claim on his commended men's estates, as appears to have happened in the case of Wigod's man, Alwine.

In terms of size, the lands of Miles and Robert that were attributed to Beorhtric are comparable. Three large estates, Waddesdon (27 hides), Marsworth (20 hides) and High Wycombe (10 hides), and five smaller ones of between one and five hides could belong to one individual. Furthermore there is no correlation between the size of holdings and the two by-names; Waddesdon and High Wycombe were held by Beorhtric the man of Queen Edith, while Marsworth was held by the man of King Edward, suggesting they were the same person.

If it is tentatively assumed that all references to Beorhtric connected to either Miles Crispin or Robert d'Oilly refer to the same man, for the reasons given, it is necessary to ask who his other post-Conquest successors were. In addition to the eight estates that passed to Miles and Robert, a further fourteen manors were held by a Beorhtric, man (or thegn) of King Edward or Queen Edith (See Appendix 3). Once again, it is difficult to be certain as to whether all of these were the same person. Six of these seventeen properties were in the county of Berkshire,⁴² three in Hampshire,⁴³ two in Buckinghamshire,⁴⁴ two in Gloucestershire,⁴⁵ and one each in Hertfordshire, Surrey and Worcestershire.⁴⁶ It is most likely that these all refer to the same person, as Turstin fitzRolf succeeded to one of his manors in each of the counties represented on the list except Hertfordshire and Surrey.

The Beorhtric who held three and a half hides of Count Robert of Mortain in Wiggington was probably identical with the antecessor of Miles Crispin and Robert d'Oilly, given the association between Beorhtric's man at Tiscott and Wigod and Robert

⁴² GDB, fols. 56v, 62, 63, 63v.

⁴³ GDB, fol. 39v, 47v, 48v.

⁴⁴ GDB, fols. 150, 151.

⁴⁵ GDB, fols. 167, 169v.

⁴⁶ GDB, fols. 136v, 31v, 176v.

d'Oilly, already discussed. What remains uncertain is whether the antecessor of Turstin fitzRolf is the same man. The latter's holding of a close in the borough of Wallingford, assuming this is the same man based on the fact he held in Berkshire, may provide a possible link between him and Wigod and therefore suggest that we are dealing with a single individual.

As for the manor of Mitcham in Surrey and that of Stanford-on-Teme in Worcestershire, we can be even less certain. Geographically, they are very isolated from the rest of Beorhtric's lands which were concentrated in Buckinghamshire. The Worcestershire entry explicitly uses the term, 'thegn of Queen Edith' suggesting he was the same person who held High Wycombe and Waddeson. Furthermore, Robert d'Oilly was a subtenant at Clifton on Teme less than three miles away.⁴⁷

The final question that must be asked in identifying Beorhtric is, was he identical with Beorhtric son of Ælfgar, the pre-Conquest magnate who held extensive estates in the south-western counties? Historians have tended to consider them separate. Williams in her study of the west-country magnate does not discuss the possibility that he held around Buckinghamshire, and Clarke concluded they were two different people.⁴⁸ They could possibly have been the same person, named differently in different parts of the country. The fact that Queen Edith's man appears to have held in Gloucestershire, less than twelve miles from Beorhtric's centre at Tewkesbury and in Worcestershire, where Beorhtric son of Ælfgar also held land, might suggest this but it will be assumed that these two were different people, with Queen Edith's man, Beorhtric holding a valuable, but geographically concentrated estate centred on Buckinghamshire. The relatively greater

⁴⁷ GDB, fol. 176v.

⁴⁸ Williams, 'A West-Country Magnate', pp. 41-68.

prominence enjoyed by Beorhtric son of Ælfgar and the fuller evidence available concerning him would suggest that it would be easier to identify him were he the Buckinghamshire based landholder.⁴⁹

1.1.3 Other Pre-Conquest Landholders

In addition to the two principal pre-Conquest landholders, Wigod and Beorhtric, whose estates account for just over half of the honour, Domesday Book lists the names of a number of other predecessors. The remainder of the honour of Wallingford, amounting to forty percent of the total hidage, consisted of individual small estates held by a large number of people. Some of these were individual manors of wealthy pre-Conquest landholders, such as Queen Edith's fifteen hides at Haseley in Oxfordshire,⁵⁰ but predominantly they were small landholders of little more than local significance. The larger of these holdings are set out in the table:

⁴⁹ Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 41; Williams, 'A West-Country Magnate', pp. 41-45.

⁵⁰ GDB, fol. 159.

Table 2. *TRE* holdings other than those of Wigod and Beorhtric

Name and by-names of <i>TRE</i> landholder	Hides	Total TRW value (£)	% of Hides of honour c. 1300
Earl Harold	47	43	7%
Leofnoth	36	25	5%
Ulf	34	15	5%
Wulfstan	28	29	4%
Hemming	17	11	2%
Thorkil	16	17	2%
Queen Edith	16	15	2%
Siward	16	13	2%
Baldwin	7	6	1%
Ordgar	5	5	1%
Individual Estates:	66	64	10%
Total	287	242	41%

Most notable of these is Earl Harold. Seven per cent of the honour of Wallingford (nine per cent of all of Miles Crispin's land) was connected to Earl Harold before the Conquest and is set out in the following table:

Table 3. Estates of Earl Harold and his men

Vill	Shire	Name and by-names of <i>TRE</i> landholder	Name of 1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRW value (£)
<u>Demesne estates</u>						
Ogbourne	Wiltshire	Earl Harold	Miles Crispin	-	10	15
Chilton Foliat	Wiltshire	Earl Harold	Miles Crispin	Reginald	10	10
Clyffe Pypard	Wiltshire	Earl Harold	Miles Crispin	Humphrey	5	2.5

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Total					25	27.5
<u>Commended men</u>						
Chearsley	Buckinghamshire	Healfdene, man of Harold	Miles Crispin	Richard	1.5	1.1
Eaton	Berkshire	Healfdene, man of King Edward	Miles Crispin	Richard	5	2.5
Appleton	Berkshire	Healfdene	Miles Crispin	Richard	5	3
Saunderton	Buckinghamshire	Alric, man of Harold	Miles Crispin	Osbert	5	5
Upton	Buckinghamshire	Alric, thegn	Miles Crispin	Alric	1.5	1
Oakley	Bedfordshire	Godwine, man of Harold	Countess Judith	Miles Crispin	1	0.5
Bradwell	Buckinghamshire	Godwine, man of Alric filius Goding	Miles Crispin	William	1.375	1
Bradwell	Buckinghamshire	Sibbi, man of Alric filius Goding	Miles Crispin	William	1.375	1
Total					21.75	15.1

Three of the Earl's Wiltshire estates, Ogbourne (10 hides), Chilton Foliat (10 hides), and Clyffe Pypard (5 hides) were in the hands of Miles Crispin in 1086, along with eight manors in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Bedfordshire that had been held by Harold's men. Here also there appears to have been a connection with Wigod of

Wallingford, who held land in Wiltshire likely to have been at Ogbourne in the time of King Edward, according to the *Liber Exoniensis* and a Wiltshire geld roll.⁵¹

Healfdene's connection to Harold is evident from the Domesday entry for Chearsley where he held one and a half hides. At Eaton he is described as a man of King Edward, and may be the same Healfdene as the housecarl of King Edward whose ten hides of land at Hanslope in Buckinghamshire, and two hides in Northamptonshire passed to Winemar Flandris, though in none of these instances is he connected with Earl Harold.⁵²

Alric, a man of Earl Harold held five hides at Saunderton, while in Bradwell twenty-five miles away, two men of an Alric filius Goding, Godwine and Sibi, held just over a hide each. In Bedfordshire, a man of Earl Harold called Godwine held one hide. Since all of these manors eventually passed to Miles Crispin, and involve places relatively close together, and deal with similar sized estates, it is likely that Alric, Godwine and Sibi were men connected to Earl Harold, whose estates passed to Miles Crispin along with some of the Earl's own Wiltshire holdings.

In conclusion, Domesday reveals that the lands that were to make up the honour of Wallingford, were held by a number of pre-Conquest landholders. As Keats-Rohan has observed, two men, Wigod of Wallingford and Beorhtric, a man of Queen Edith are especially prominent among these. In terms of hidage, twenty-nine percent of the later honour was held by Wigod and his network, while twenty-five percent was held by Beorhtric and his. The remaining forty-six percent consisted of many individual estates;

⁵¹ *VCH Wiltshire*, ii, p. 200.

⁵² GDB, fols. 152; 226v.

parts of larger national holdings as well as holdings of small holders. Keats-Rohan's analysis undertaken on a different basis found that of 135 manors that later became part of the honour, 79 (fifty-nine percent) were held by Wigod and his network of kinsmen and men under his lordship, 22 (sixteen percent) were held by Beorhtric, 8 (six percent) she identifies as royal or comital lands, while 26 (nineteen percent) were held by others. Part of the reason for the discrepancy is that Keats-Rohan has included the Oxfordshire lands for which Wigod's tenure is uncertain, whereas to avoid begging the question, these have not been included in this analysis. Were they to be included, the figure would be similar to that of Keats-Rohan. The results of these investigations raise many questions about the way these lands changed hands in the decades after the Norman Conquest, and how they formed the honour of Wallingford.

1.2 CONQUEST AND COLONISATION

The extent of change and continuity in the process of the conquest and colonisation of England after 1066 remains the subject of much debate among historians. Peter Sawyer emphasised continuity in tenurial structures, arguing that many pre-Conquest lordships are invisible in the Domesday evidence and that in many instances where a number of smaller estates were incorporated into large post-Conquest fiefs, giving the impression of tenurial change, the named predecessors were the tenants or kinsmen of a single lord whose lands had passed to a new Norman tenant-in-chief.⁵³ David Roffe sees essential continuity in tenurial relationships before and after the Conquest, arguing that estates held

⁵³ Sawyer, 'Tenurial Revolution?', pp. 71-84.

by tenants-in-chief after 1066 were often formed from lands that had been held with rights of sake and soke, synonymous with tenure by book, before the Conquest.⁵⁴ Robin Fleming, in contrast, has concluded that despite instances of continuity, what occurred in this period was not simply a change of personnel, but also a tenurial revolution. Detailed analysis of large amounts of Domesday data have led her to argue that succession of land by antecessor, that is, the process whereby a Norman lord gained all the property of a named pre-Conquest landholder, was only one type of succession, and that in the bulk of cases, geographical grants were more significant in the transfer of property.⁵⁵ The work of George Garnett contends that all pre-Conquest rights were dissolved as a result of the Conquest and that a radically new tenurial structure dependent on the king was imposed by the Normans, with all those holding lands in 1066 being considered to have forfeited their rights to their land.⁵⁶

As Sawyer and others have noted, the honour of Wallingford appears to present us with one of the few known examples of land transferred to Norman lords through marriage, thus displaying a significant level of tenurial continuity.⁵⁷ Keats-Rohan's recent article argues, based on an account written in 1212 together with analysis of Domesday and other contemporary evidence, that Wigod survived the Conquest but that he had died by 1086, his lands and office having passed to the Robert d'Oilly as a result of Robert's marriage to Eadgyth, daughter of Wigod, and that Miles Crispin succeeded Robert as a result of his marriage to Matilda, daughter of Robert and Eadgyth.⁵⁸ First

⁵⁴ Roffe, 'From Thegnage to Barony', pp. 157-176.

⁵⁵ Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, p. 114.

⁵⁶ Garnett, *Conquered England*.

⁵⁷ Sawyer, 'Tenurial Revolution?', pp. 74-5; Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, pp. 731-6; J.H. Round, *VCH Buckinghamshire*, i, pp. 213-4.

⁵⁸ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', p. 55.

Robert, and then Miles, she argues, succeeded Wigod in the office of staller, or constable, and it was the lands appurtenant to this royal office that formed the later honour of Wallingford.⁵⁹ The honour's origins, she proposes, therefore lay in the pre-Conquest period, partly in the creation of military governorships under Cnut, but also in the territory Roffe has argued was assigned to the borough of Wallingford at its foundation in the ninth century.⁶⁰ By comparing the Burghal Hidage of the ninth century with Domesday, Roffe suggests that it is possible to reconstruct the territories assigned to each Alfredian burh. He has calculated that if Wallingford's territory were taken to consist of the six hundreds of southern Oxfordshire combined with the number of hundreds in Berkshire (less four south of the Thames that he argues were assigned to the early borough of Sashes, near Cookham), a figure of twenty-four hundreds is reached, which if the theoretical value of 100 hides is ascribed to each hundred corresponds to the 2400 hides assigned to Wallingford in the Burghal Hidage, representing the territory it was responsible for. Wigod's office, Keats-Rohan argues, brought him lands throughout the former territory of Wallingford that with the development of Berkshire and the demise of Sashes had otherwise ceased to exist.⁶¹ According to this theory, these lands amounted to an Anglo-Saxon unit similar to the 'castleries' known about for Anglo-Norman England, that continued to be held by the constable of Wallingford throughout the twelfth century, though in close connection to the king.

There is much to be said for Keats-Rohan's hypothesis that stresses such great continuity, but the evidence is thin. Alternative explanations must be explored, including

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 52-67.

⁶⁰ Roffe, 'Wallingford in Domesday', pp 42-4. He argues that the remaining four hundreds of Berkshire, together with six hundreds of southern Buckinghamshire made up the 1000 hides attributed to Sashes in the Burghal Hidage.

⁶¹ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 56-63.

the possibility on the one hand that Robert d'Oilly and Miles built up an estate and used Wigod to legitimise it, either sidelining him or exaggerating his role. On the other hand, there is the possibility that Wigod, having survived the Conquest, used his office and influence to enrich himself substantially, and that Robert and Miles were the beneficiaries of this; in other words, that continuity in personnel obscured a tenurial revolution. The remainder of this chapter explores these issues.

1.2.1 The Transfer of Lands to the Normans, 1066-1086

Historians have identified six ways in which Domesday tenants-in-chief gained their lands after 1066: through a claim to inherit from a named antecessor; estates being granted by the king on an individual basis; territorial grants whereby a large block of land within a defined geographical area, such as a hundred, rape or county, were granted to an individual by the king; through marriage; land acquired by officials through the exercise of their office; and land taken by powerful lords as the opportunity arose.⁶² By 1086, the lands that were to become the honour of Wallingford were divided between Miles Crispin and Robert d'Oilly. Both of these held lands of Wigod of Wallingford and lands of Beorhtric.

The date of Wigod's death is essential to understanding the transfer of his lands. Did his Norman successors gain the lands during his lifetime or did they inherit the land after his death as Keats-Rohan and others have argued? The evidence that he survived the Conquest is conclusive. The following entry appears in Hampshire Domesday:

⁶² As summarised by Roffe, *Domesday*, pp. 20-22.

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Alwine White holds 2 hides. He himself held them *TRE*. They were assessed at 2 hides; now at half a hide. There is land for 1½ ploughs. There is 1 plough and 2 slaves; 1 villan and 1 bordar with half a plough. It was worth 40s; now 30s. This Alwine held this land *TRE* under the protection of Vigot. He now holds the same under Miles, and it was delivered by Humphrey Videloup to Vigot, in exchange for Broadwater [Sussex], as he himself says; but the hundred knows nothing of this.⁶³

The date this happened is not known, but as noted above, it is likely to have been a result of the creation of the Sussex rapes in the first years after the Conquest.⁶⁴ Mason suggested that the formation of the rapes was an early development, but this compensation need not necessarily be contemporaneous with these events.⁶⁵ Either way, it demonstrates that Wigod was alive after the Conquest and that he evidently retained some social standing such that he was compensated for the loss of his lands in Sussex.

Another example of Wigod's post-Conquest activity can be found in the Domesday entry for Tiscott in Tring, Hertfordshire.⁶⁶ It was held in 1086 by Robert d'Oilly and was assessed at four hides *TRE*, and now two. Before the Conquest, it had been held by five sokemen, two of which were men of Beorhtric. The entry states that, 'none of these belonged to Vigot, [Robert's] predecessor, but each of them could sell his land.'⁶⁷ It goes on to describe how one of these men bought his land from King William for 9 ounces of gold and then turned to Wigod for protection. In this instance, Robert d'Oilly appears to have come into the possession of a manor (one of only two he held in the county), as the successor of Wigod. The five sokemen holding this land *TRE* had no connection to Wigod, while two of them were men of Beorhtric.

⁶³ GDB, fol. 50v.

⁶⁴ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, personal communication.

⁶⁵ Mason, *William the First and the Sussex Rapes*.

⁶⁶ GDB, fol. 137v.

⁶⁷ Ibid. Translation from, *Domesday Book. A Complete Translation* ed. A. Williams and G.H. Martin, p. 381.

There are two instances in Domesday of a post-Conquest subtenant named Wigod in the entries for Redbourn, Hertfordshire, and Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire.⁶⁸ In the first, it is stated that Wigod holds one virgate of land of the bishop of Lisieux, while the second states that Wigod held one hide in Little Missenden of the Count of Mortain. These may well be different people, but both of these manors were held *TRE* by men called Alwine, which is also the name of a known man of Wigod, and both are within thirty-four miles of Wallingford, close to other manors of the honour. Of course, Alwine was a common name, and neither of these properties became part of the honour of Wallingford in later years. If these refer to Wigod of Wallingford, which they may well do, given the rarity of the name, this would be important evidence that he had been sidelined and been largely dispossessed in his lifetime. These may, on the other hand, refer to a different person, as it cannot be assumed that all occurrences of this name, despite its rarity, refer to the same person. There is the further possibility that it may reflect slightly out-of-date information finding its way into Domesday.

There is evidence to suggest that Wigod had a son, Toki, and a daughter, Eadgyth. Historians have generally attributed Robert and Miles's claim to Wigod's lands as deriving from Eadgyth's inheritance of her father's lands, as we shall see. The problem with this, however, is that Toki was alive until 1079.⁶⁹ He died at the siege of Gerberoi in France, while heroically bringing King William a new horse. The account in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle would suggest that Toki at least was loyal to the new regime, and might be taken to be further evidence that Wigod himself was too.⁷⁰ Given the uncertainty of

⁶⁸ GDB, fols. 134v, 146.

⁶⁹ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, MS. D. s.a. 1079.

⁷⁰ Williams, *The English*, p. 101.

the date of Wigod's death, it is not clear whether Toki ever inherited his father's lands, or whether Robert or Miles were holding by this date. If Wigod and his family survived the Conquest and established customs of inheritance operated, then it would only have been after Toki's death that Eadgyth stood any chance of inheriting her father's lands. The name Toki was recorded in Domesday as having held four estates in 1066 that might be linked to Wigod and imply that this was Wigod's son; at Iver in Buckinghamshire, Ickenham in Middlesex, and at Brinkworth and Chippenham in Wiltshire.⁷¹ In none of these, however, is Wigod mentioned. At Iver, the entry mentions that Toki, a thegn of King Edward held there, and that Robert d'Oilly held the manor 'as [part] of his wife's fief.' This would seem to add weight to the hypothesis that Robert inherited Wigod's lands through marriage.

The descent of the honour of Wallingford is often cited as a rare example of intermarriage between a member of the old English aristocracy and the Norman incomers. This is due to the unusual survival for an Anglo-Norman lordship, of an account of its origins, which was written in 1212 by the constable of Wallingford in response to an inquest. The letter states that:

Wygodus de Walengheford tenuit honorem de Walingheford tempore Regis Haraldi et post tempore Regis Willelmi primi et habuit ex uxore sua quandam filiam quam dedit Roberto Doilli. Ipse Robertus habuit ex ea quandam filium, Mathillidem nomine, que fuit heres eius. Milo Crispinus desponsavit hanc et habuit cum ea predictum honorem de Walingheford. Mortuo Milone, dedit dominus Rex Henricus primus predictam Mathillidem Brienno filio Comitum pariter cum hereditate sua. Ipse ex ea nullum habuit heredem. Idem Briennius et prefata Mathillis uxor eius tempore Regis Stephani reddiderunt se religioni et dominus Henricus, filius Mathillidis Imperatricis, qui eo tempore fuit dux Normannie saisivit predictum honorem.⁷²

⁷¹ GDB, fols., 149, 129, 71, 73.

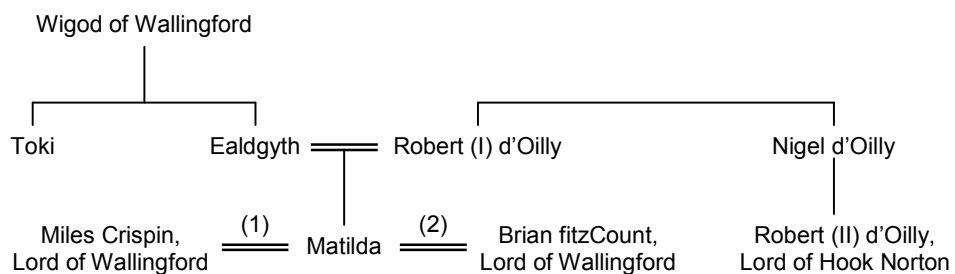
⁷² *Book of Fees*, p. 116.

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[Wigod of Wallingford held the honor of Wallingford in the time of King Harold and afterwards in the time of King William the First, and had from his wife a daughter whom he gave to Robert d'Oilly. Robert had from her a daughter, named Matilda, who was his heir. Miles Crispin married the daughter and had with her the said honor of Wallingford. With the death of Miles, the Lord King Henry the First gave the said Matilda to Brien fitzCount together with her inheritance. He had from her no heir. And so Brien and the aforementioned Matilda, his wife, in the time of King Stephen gave themselves to religion and the lord Henry, son of the Empress Matilda, who was at the time duke of Normandy, seised the said honor.]

This letter, written a hundred and fifty years after the events it describes, but perhaps from written records now lost, is the only source for the descent of the honour after the Conquest, the relationships it reveals being set out below:

Figure 3. The descent of the honour of Wallingford according to the letter of 1212



J.H. Round was sceptical of this account ‘which professes to trace [the honour’s] descent from Harold’s days,’ and drew attention to the chronological problems with this version of events, arguing that it is strange that Matilda’s successive husbands should have been living respectively under William I and under Stephen, but was unable to find any evidence to contradict it.⁷³ Freeman had difficulty with the pattern of inheritance whereby the land of Wigod appears to have been shared equally between Robert and Miles, while Robert d’Oilly’s heir was his brother Nigel, whose fee with its *caput* at

⁷³ *VCH Buckinghamshire*, i, p. 214.

Hook Norton in Oxfordshire descended through the d'Oilly family well into the thirteenth century. He suggested that it was 'almost certain that Miles as well as Robert married a daughter of Wigod.' This too lacks supporting evidence.⁷⁴

Although the 1212 letter is much later than the events it describes, it does complement other evidence. A spurious charter copied into the Oseney cartulary in the 1220s, purporting to be the foundation charter of the church of St. George in Oxford Castle gives Robert's wife the English name Alditha, though the charter is not genuine.⁷⁵ It is known on the firmer evidence of the mid-twelfth-century Abingdon Chronicle that Miles Crispin was lord of Wallingford, and that his wife's name was indeed Matilda.⁷⁶ As we have seen, Robert's manor of Iver, which had been held by Wigod's son Toki, was said to be 'of his [Robert's] wife's fief' in Buckinghamshire Domesday.⁷⁷ If the St George's foundation charter was based on a genuine original, the marriage could have been soon after 1066 as the chapel was founded around 1074.⁷⁸ It would certainly have to have been before 1086, as we shall see, because according to the 1212 letter their daughter married Miles Crispin, who appears to have gained most of Wigod's lands by 1086. An arrangement between Robert and Miles with little or no involvement of Wigod cannot be ruled out. On the other hand, Orderic Vitalis, writing in the early part of the following century, mentioned that intermarriage between Normans and English took place in the years before the rebellion of 1070/71, and it is quite conceivable that this is when Eadgyth and Robert were married.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, p. 734

⁷⁵ *Oseney*, iv, no. 1A.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; *Historia*, pp. 18-19.

⁷⁷ GDB fol. 149; Williams, *The English*, p. 101.

⁷⁸ Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, p. 734.

⁷⁹ *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis* ed. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1969), ii, p. 257.

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The Domesday evidence suggests a link between Wigod, Robert and Miles, as we have seen. If the testimony of the 1212 letter is accepted, there are still a number of possibilities as to how land was transferred from Wigod to his Norman successors. The most obvious would be that Robert and Miles inherited Wigod's land through their wives. This is implied in the letter but there are problems with this hypothesis given that Toki was alive until 1079, and that there is a possibility that Wigod was still alive in 1086. Either the marriage happened after 1079, when Matilda would have been only six years old, or Toki was not regarded as Wigod's heir, which has important implications for our interpretation of the marriage in its political and social context. Eleanor Searle has argued that marriage in cases like this should be seen in the context of legitimising the Conquest, and she stresses both the role of King William in arranging marriages to manage succession, and the importance of inheritance by Normans through women.⁸⁰ Looked at from this point of view, it is quite possible that the marriage by which Robert d'Oilly gained the lands of Wigod was designed to bring the lands of a wealthy English family to this Norman follower of William, irrespective of Toki's existence. Searle indicates that inheritance in this period was not automatic or rigidly defined and depended more on a 'pool of heirs' than a designated single male heir.⁸¹ If there had been a marriage between Robert and Eadgyth, and it had taken place before Toki's death in 1079, it may, as Searle proposes, have sidelined Toki and been designed to legitimise Robert's tenure. On the other hand, if the circumstances of Toki's death as related in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle are to be accepted, it seems that he was considered a dependable royal servant who distinguished himself, on that occasion at least, in battle. Wigod's

⁸⁰ Searle, 'Women and the legitimisation of succession', pp. 159-70.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 160.

nephew, Alfred, was a tenant-in-chief in Oxfordshire, as well as a tenant of the honour of Wallingford, whose descendants may well have still been tenants in the early thirteenth century.⁸² It would therefore seem strange that Toki, a capable member of a family that seems to have enjoyed some favour under the new regime should not be considered Wigod's heir.

Hugh Thomas has proposed an alternative explanation for this marriage which is that it took place very soon after the conquest and was designed to create a marriage tie between an English magnate and a Norman follower of the new king.⁸³ This would allow for the marriage to have taken place at a time that suits the chronology that the evidence points to, while not necessarily damaging Toki's position as his father's heir. If this is the case then it would show something of the early policy of the Conqueror who, some historians have argued, sought continuity with the Anglo-Saxon past until the rebellions of 1069-1071 after which the policy changed. This policy may have worked to some extent in this instance. The fact that Earl Edwin transferred one of his followers to Ralph d'Oilly, may suggest that cordial relations were developed between the d'Oilly family and the English.⁸⁴

If the purpose of the marriage was to establish Robert d'Oilly in England, the question may be asked, how far this is visible in Domesday Book. Of Robert's estates, only ten per cent of the total value was land that Domesday records as having belonged to Wigod or his family. It may be, however, that much more had been Wigod's but which is not explicitly recorded. Twenty-nine of seventy-four entries relating to Robert d'Oilly in

⁸² GDB, fol. 160; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 323.

⁸³ Thomas, *English and Normans*, p. 149.

⁸⁴ GDB, fol. 154v; Thomas, *English and Normans*, p. 149; Williams, *The English*, p. 101.

Domesday Book have no reference to a pre-Conquest landholder, and twenty-six of these are in Oxfordshire. These lands (nearly forty per cent of the total hidage) could well have been Wigod's.⁸⁵ If this were the case, as Freeman and Williams have argued, it would mean that around half of Robert d'Oilly's land had been Wigod's. The remainder of Robert's lands outside Oxfordshire were held by a number of different pre-Conquest landholders. In Buckinghamshire, his main predecessor was Beorhtric the queen's thegn, while in Berkshire, most of his land had belonged to King Edward.⁸⁶ The largest single source of Robert's landed wealth therefore came from Wigod. But not all of Wigod's land passed to him. Assuming the majority of unattributed Oxfordshire estates were Wigod's, Robert and Miles Crispin each shared approximately thirty percent of Wigod's lands.

The pattern of marriages may partly explain the tenurial relationship between Wigod, Robert and Miles. Wigod's property, however, accounts for only twenty-nine per cent of the honour of Wallingford as a whole. The question remains as to how the remaining two-thirds came into the honour. The course of the conquest and colonisation that took place in the years between 1066 and 1086 was complex and has been the subject of much recent scholarship.⁸⁷ This case is particularly interesting both due to the significant element played by intermarriage, and because, it will be argued, one must look as much to the Englishman, Wigod of Wallingford and his family, as to the Normans

⁸⁵ Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, p. 732; Williams, *The English*, p. 101. Keats-Rohan has also followed this interpretation.

⁸⁶ GDB, fols. 149, 62.

⁸⁷ See Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 48-99.

Miles Crispin and Robert d'Oilly, as key protagonists in the establishment of the post-Conquest honour of Wallingford.

Apart from inheritance by marriage, it is likely that a range of other factors contributed to Robert and Miles's honours after 1066. The honour of Wallingford's relatively compact nature, with no manor further than fifty miles from Wallingford, and the majority within a thirty mile radius, raises the possibility that its origins lay in one or more territorial grants. The greatest concentration of Wallingford lands was in south Oxfordshire, but even here, these lands do not have the territorial integrity found in the Sussex rapes, Shropshire, or some of the northern castleries. The presence of lands of individuals other than Wigod may be a result of the process, set out by Fleming, whereby territorial blocks were granted out over a period, often building on earlier antecessorial grants.⁸⁸ There are many similarities here with the fees of William Peverel and Roger de Bully in Nottinghamshire, whose lands were made up of the holdings of more than a hundred obscure men.⁸⁹ Approximately forty-one named individuals held land that became part of the honour in 1300, including Wigod, Beorhtric, Earl Harold and their men, a few individual estates of King Edward⁹⁰ and Queen Edith,⁹¹ and thirty-six named men. The possibility of territorial grant of this kind having taken place cannot be dismissed.

There is also evidence that Domesday estates were assembled through grants of individual manors granted by the king as they became available. Robert d'Oilly's one and a half hides at Ludwell, was given to him, so its Domesday entry explains, by King

⁸⁸ Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, pp. 161-4.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

⁹⁰ GDB, fol. 176v. Three hides at Clifton upon Teme in Worcestershire, held TRW by Robert d'Oilly as subtenant of Osbern fitzRichard.

⁹¹ GDB, fol. 159. Sixteen hides at Haseley, Oxfordshire, held TRW by Miles Crispin.

William at the siege of Sainte-Suzanne.⁹² It may be that other manors were added to the honour over time. This is the most likely explanation for the presence of the lands of Earl Harold among those of Miles Crispin in 1086. Harold held three of Miles's Wiltshire manors, worth a total of £27 10s in 1086. He was the wealthiest of pre-Conquest landholders with lands with an estimated total value of nearly £3000, making these three estates a very minor component.⁹³ Harold was killed at the Battle of Hastings in 1066, so his lands would have become available immediately. It is quite possible that these estates were granted to Wigod who already held at Manton, near Marlborough, and Letcombe Basset, and probably Ogbourne, according to entry in the *Liber Exoniensis* Geld Roll for Selkley Hundred,⁹⁴ thus consolidating his position in that part of the Marlborough Downs. How far was this transfer of land organised centrally, and how far it was the result of independent action by Wigod or Miles? The *Liber Exoniensis* entry states that 'the king has eighteen hides of Wigod's land,' while Miles Crispin had six that may suggest that this property did not pass straight to Miles, but was subject to royal intervention.⁹⁵ It also demonstrates another connection with Wigod, though whether they were his before 1066, or after, is not known.

One possibility that must be entertained is that land was grabbed in the aftermath of the Conquest by Robert d'Oilly and Miles Crispin, or indeed by Wigod himself. Some of Wigod's concealed lordship connections have been explored, but it is conceivable that continuity of personnel may have had the effect of masking tenurial change. Wigod

⁹² GDB, fol. 158v.

⁹³ Baxter, *Earls of Mercia*, p. 129.

⁹⁴ *VCH Wiltshire*, ii, p. 199.

⁹⁵ *VCH Wiltshire*, ii, p. 201; Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, p. 733.

should, perhaps, be seen as a post-Conquest lord with interests and methods akin to those of his Norman contemporaries.

There is much in Domesday that hints at a very successful post-Conquest career for Wigod, thus illuminating the process by which the honour was formed in the aftermath of the Conquest. The idea erroneously put forward by the eighteenth century historian White Kennet that, as the invading Norman army approached Wallingford on the way to London after the battle of Hastings, Wigod went out to meet Duke William to surrender the town to him, and entertained him there until the arrival of Archbishop Stigand and the rest of Edgar's supporters arrived, presumably developed out of an assumption that Wigod must have allowed William's army to cross the Thames at Wallingford, indicating that he accepted William as king while many of his associates in the Old English aristocracy continued to support their candidate, Edgar Ætheling.⁹⁶ William of Poitiers does indeed place the submission of Stigand at Wallingford, and has the rest of Edgar's supporters submit afterwards at Berkhamstead, after William and his army had crossed the Thames at Wallingford.⁹⁷ If he were responsible for assisting the Conqueror's army at this time, it may help to explain how Wigod was able not only to survive the Conquest, but apparently profit from it as well. Perhaps as a result of his shrewd manoeuvrings in this period and after, he appears to have gained favour in the new regime. The marriage of his daughter to Robert d'Oilly may have helped his acceptance with the newcomers or may have been a result of it. Without further evidence it is difficult to be certain, but there is much to suggest that Wigod not only survived the

⁹⁶ Kennet, *Parochial Antiquities*, p. 76. As Freeman points out, Kennet's view has little to support it: Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, pp. 731-6.

⁹⁷ *Gesta Guillelmi*, p. 146.

Conquest, but thrived. Most studies that have addressed Wigod have seen him as a pre-Conquest figure. But it may be equally appropriate to view Wigod alongside other English survivors like Thorkell of Warwick, Edward of Salisbury, and Alfsige of Faringdon, as a member of the post-Conquest Anglo-Norman aristocracy, a position he seems to have held, but which his death before 1086 has obscured.⁹⁸ Removing the mental divide of 1066 and seeing Wigod in this light goes some way towards explaining the tenurial situation in Domesday Book.

His son's closeness to the new king in 1079 has been mentioned, as has some of the Domesday evidence that suggests he was alive and retained some degree of status. Wigod's increased influence after the Conquest is also evident in Domesday. In Surrey, the survey records Miles Crispin's holding of five hides of land at Chessington, which had belonged to Magni Svert, but which the entry adds the phrase, 'When King William came into England, Wigod did not have it.'⁹⁹ This could mean that Wigod was considered Miles's antecessor and that Miles had somehow gained this estate in addition to Wigod's lands, but it could also be taken to mean that Wigod had somehow gained this manor from Magni Svert after 1066, and which had then passed to Miles in a similar way to the land he had gained in Hampshire in exchange for Broadwater in Sussex discussed above.

The developments at Tiscott whereby one of the sokemen holding land there bought his land back from King William and turned to Wigod for protection may reflect broader processes, which saw many men commended to other English lords, change their

⁹⁸ Williams, *The English*, pp. 98-109.

⁹⁹ GDB, fol. 36v.

loyalties in the aftermath of the Conquest.¹⁰⁰ Wigod, as an Englishman who still had royal favour and the political influence to be able to provide protection may well have gained the allegiance (and the land) of a number of men around his own estates. The large numbers of small individual estates that made up the honour has been commented on. Many of these may have come into Wigod's influence as a result of their holders turning to him for protection. Several of Miles's tenants in 1086 were Englishmen who had also held in the time of King Edward. Alwine White is one instance of this, and it is significant that his entry in Hampshire Domesday is listed under the 'Land of the King's Thegns' despite stating that he holds under Miles.¹⁰¹ It is possible that other individual thegns' land came to the honour as a result of their owners turning to Wigod for protection, either voluntarily or through force. The case of Thorkell of Warwick illustrates that Englishmen did continue to thrive under the Normans and used the same methods to further their interests and build successful careers.¹⁰²

Wigod's post-Conquest prominence may partly explain the many questions that surround the presence of so many lands of the queen's thegn, Beorhtric in the honour. Beorhtric's lands, the next largest portion of the honour after Wigod's, accounts for twenty-five per cent of the honour's hidage. Beorhtric was named as an antecessor of both Miles and Robert. Fifty-five percent of Beorhtric's land (60 hides of a total of 110 held by Beorhtric) was held by Miles in 1086, while Robert held twenty-nine percent (32 hides). The remaining sixteen percent had passed to six other tenants-in-chief, each with

¹⁰⁰ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', p. 55.

¹⁰¹ GDB, fol. 50v.

¹⁰² Williams, *The English*, pp. 103-4.

negligible amounts of land.¹⁰³ That the bulk of Beorhtric's lands should have had the same fate as those of Wigod of Wallingford, and have been divided, in a roughly similar proportion, between the same two tenants-in-chief may be explained if Wigod had gained possession of Beorhtric's lands sometime after 1066, but before his estates were divided between Miles and Robert. Though there is no evidence for this, such a situation is not unlikely. The case of two of Beorhtric's men at Tiscott turning to Wigod for protection is the only known connection between the two largest antecessors of the honour of Wallingford, whose lands account for about sixteen percent each, of the thirteenth-century honour, and may hint at events in the early years of William's reign that explain the link between Beorhtric and Wigod's estates, but which cannot be proven. Keats-Rohan has suggested that they may have been kinsmen, both descended from Ealdorman Æthelwold I (d. 946) whose will mentions Ogbourne in Wiltshire and Broadwater in Sussex and whose descendant Ælfgifu, the divorced wife of King Eadwig, received lands in Buckinghamshire in 966 that were later connected with Queen Edith and Beorhtric.¹⁰⁴ This is a possibility, and could provide a reason for Wigod taking over Beorhtric's lands after the Conquest.

If Wigod did survive with some influence, it is also possible that in addition to attracting landholders to his lordship, he took advantage of the turmoil that followed the Conquest to expropriate the lands of others. The case cited above in the Abingdon chronicle of a monk named Leofric complaining of his land at Whitchurch being forcibly taken by Wigod may refer to events before 1066, but it could equally describe part of the

¹⁰³ Hugh de Bolbec gained Beorhtric's 3½ hides in Chesham, Buckinghamshire; Robert count of Mortain, gained 6½ hides in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire; William fitzAnsculf 3 hides; Walter the Fleming 2 hides in Milton Ernest, Bedfordshire; Osbern fitzRichard 1½ hides in Stanford on Teme in Worcestershire; and Odo of Bayeux who held half a virgate in Beachendon.

¹⁰⁴ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', p. 59.

process by which Wigod himself built up estates that later came into the possession of Miles and Robert.¹⁰⁵

Close analysis of Domesday evidence reveals that the survey conceals Wigod's presence in a number of cases. Even if the vast majority of the estates that made up the honour of Wallingford had some connection to Wigod, this does not necessarily mean that he held them 'in the time of King Edward'. The kinds of developments observed by Fleming may well have occurred in the honour of Wallingford, but we should not ignore the likelihood that it was Wigod, as well as Miles and Robert d'Oilly, who benefitted from the upheaval of the years after 1066. The line between tenurial change and continuity is blurred by Wigod's post-Conquest career. Clarke has suggested that the widely scattered nature of Wigod's estate may suggest it had recently increased in size, and might explain his apparent absence from all but a few of the sources (and these of questionable authenticity) of King Edward's reign.¹⁰⁶ Whether this points to a successful career under Edward, Harold, William or a combination is difficult to tell. If Wigod did continue to act as a royal official under William, he would have been well placed to gain the submission of lesser men who held in estates neighbouring his, and to accept royal patronage. The most likely explanation for the incorporation of so many smaller estates into the honour is through a combination of a number of different processes. Grants of land by the king, as well as forced takeover, and voluntary submission of men to Wigod, may all have played a part in bringing these lands together. Other studies have shown that in the period after the Norman invasion, the relationship between English lords and their men became strained, as many landholders sought the protection of more powerful

¹⁰⁵ *Historia*, i, pp. 214-5; see above, p. 28.

¹⁰⁶ Clarke, *English Nobility*, p. 145.

lords, as their old lords ceased to be able to protect them.¹⁰⁷ Wigod, as an Englishman still able to protect his men may have been an attractive new lord in the post-Conquest world, and one who was able to use his position in local government to further his interests. Keats-Rohan's view that the honour's origins 'seem clearly to have lain in a territory composed of royal lands assembled for defensive purposes at the time of the *burh*'s creation' is one possibility, but it may represent only one aspect of the honour's formation.¹⁰⁸ Nevertheless, there was a great deal of tenurial continuity across the Conquest, and certainly much continuity in personnel. This continuity was aided by Wigod's continued favour under King William, and the marriage alliances that quickly grafted his family into the new Anglo-Norman elite by 1086.

1.2.2 Miles Crispin

The honour of Wallingford was still not formed in 1086, however, and it is to the career of Miles Crispin that we must now turn to examine the final developments in the formation of the later honour. According to the account of 1212, Miles Crispin was married to the granddaughter of Wigod of Wallingford. This would explain the fact that by 1086 Miles Crispin was in possession of a third of Wigod's estates. The first evidence of a link between Robert d'Oilly and Miles Crispin is the entry in the Abingdon Chronicle under 1084 which describes a lavish feast given by Robert d'Oilly at Abingdon for Miles Crispin, the bishop of Salisbury and the future king, Henry I, which has led

¹⁰⁷ Baxter, *Earls of Mercia*, pp. 293-96; Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, p. 132.

¹⁰⁸ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', p. 63.

Keats-Rohan to suggest that this was perhaps the wedding feast of his daughter.¹⁰⁹ The author of the chronicle calls him *Milo de Walingaford cognomento Crispin*.¹¹⁰ This was of course written some time after the events it describes, in the 1160s, casting some doubt as to whether the style *de Walingaford* was used of Miles when he was alive. The *Historia* was, however, based on detailed information available to its compilers among the abbey's documents, some dating back to before the Conquest.¹¹¹ It may well be reliable therefore in the style it gives to Miles. By 1086, he was apparently in possession of approximately 107 manors, which were valued at £433. This would make him one of the eighteen wealthiest landowners in England; at the lower end of the ten Domesday estates worth £450 to £650 that W.J. Corbett put into the second of five classes of tenants-in-chief.¹¹²

His family origins and career both before and after the Conquest are largely obscure. He was probably related to the Crispin family of Normandy, which was descended from Gilbert Crispin, but precisely how, is unclear. Gilbert, possibly a grandson of Duke Richard I of Normandy, was the first patron of the abbey of Bec, of which Miles of Wallingford was a patron himself.¹¹³ Miles's contemporary, another Gilbert Crispin, abbot of Westminster, certainly was a member of this family, being the son of William Crispin and Eva, sister of Amaury (III), lord of Montfort l'Amaury.¹¹⁴ The relation of these two is not clear, but Miles's possession of the unusual surname 'Crispin', his own patronage of the abbey of Bec, and the preponderance of the Christian

¹⁰⁹ *Historia*, ii, pp. 16-19; Freeman, *Norman Conquest*, iv, p. 735; Williams, *The English and the Norman Conquest*, p. 102; Keats-Rohan, 'Devolution', pp. 312-14.

¹¹⁰ *Historia*, ii, p. 16-18.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. xvii-xxi.

¹¹² Corbett, 'The Development of the Duchy of Normandy', p. 510.

¹¹³ Salter, 'Two deeds', pp. 73-78.

¹¹⁴ Evans, 'Gilbert Crispin, c.1045-1117/18'.

name 'Miles' in this family (most famously in the case of Miles Crispin the precentor of Bec and author, in the early twelfth century, of the *Vita Lanfranci*) all point to his being a member of this family.¹¹⁵ Whether Miles held land in Normandy is unknown. He was possibly related to Gilbert Crispin II, castellan of Tillières in Normandy, and to William Crispin who, according to Wace's *Roman de Rou* (written over a century later) took part in the Conquest of England.¹¹⁶ Although Miles, together with other Anglo-Norman magnates and some of his own tenants, continued his connection with Bec, no evidence of lands beyond those he held in England have been identified.

The facts concerning Miles established above indicate that he was the castellan of Wallingford. He perhaps gained this position in the 1080s when he is first known to have witnessed a royal charter relating to England. Miles witnessed three charters of William I, two confirmation charters in favour of the abbey of Bec in Normandy datable to 1077 and 1081x1087, and one in favour of Lewes Priory datable to 1081x1086.¹¹⁷ The earliest of these charters, datable to 1077, is a confirmation by King William of a large number of grants and sales made to the abbey of Bec since its foundation. The charter refers to the gifts of several members of the Crispin family over several generations. The witness list includes eleven names (including that of the king). Gilbert Crispin and Miles were among the eleven. This Gilbert Crispin was perhaps the castellan of Tillières just mentioned, or a son. Miles's position in the witness list, immediately after that of his brother (if indeed that was their relationship), may suggest that in 1077, Miles had not yet begun his career in England. He is not stated to have made any grants to the abbey

¹¹⁵ Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin*, pp. 13-18.

¹¹⁶ Wace, *Roman de Rou*, pp. 145, 186; Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin*, p. 17.

¹¹⁷ *Regesta*, nos. 166, 167, 176.

himself, while three other members of his family did. This would fit with the suggestion made in the previous chapter that he arrived in England in the 1080s. Of course there is a possibility that Miles was active in England much earlier if the marriage alliances described in 1212 were primarily to legitimise estates he and Robert d'Oilly gained, but there is no evidence of this. It will be shown below that Miles did later make grants to Bec from his lands in England. The charter in favour of Lewes Priory, which grants William de Warenne's manor of West Walton in Norfolk to the priory, is effectively a royal confirmation and may therefore represent the earliest evidence of Miles's attendance at the royal court.

The Charters of Miles Crispin

Charters provide an invaluable source of information for the historian of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy. No charters issued by Miles himself are extant, though he would doubtless have issued some. Evidence of his activity can be seen in the many confirmations of and references to his gifts in other records.¹¹⁸

The first of these charters is a confirmation by William I of a number of gifts made by Anglo-Norman landholders to the abbey of Bec and is datable to 1081x1087.¹¹⁹ Among these are grants by Miles Crispin, and two of his men, Richard son of Rainfrid and Hugh son of Miles. Hugh son of Miles may have been a son of Miles Crispin, though nothing else is known of him and he did not inherit Miles's lands, suggesting that if he was a son of the latter, he was either illegitimate, or that he died before his father. A

¹¹⁸ Salter, 'Two Deeds', pp. 73-78.

¹¹⁹ *Regesta*, no. 167.

THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF THE HONOUR TO 1107

Hugh son of Miles is mentioned in the Abingdon Chronicle as a knight of Miles's successor, Brian fitzCount, in 1116/17, who may well have been the same individual.¹²⁰

Richard son of Rainfrid was the ancestor of a tenant holding lands of the honour of Wallingford in 1154, who had connections to the Crispin family in Normandy and with the abbey of Bec.¹²¹

The charter confirms a grant made by Miles Crispin to Bec, of the manor of Swyncombe in Oxfordshire together with the tithes of his demesne at fifteen manors, while his two tenants gave tithes of their demesne manors. While the charter states that Chesterton, Henton and Adwell were held of Miles Crispin by Hugh son of Miles, Domesday records the subtenant here as 'William'.¹²² If the Hugh son of Miles mentioned in the Abingdon Chronicle in 1116/17 was the same man who had gained Henton and Adwell after 1086, then, as Salter concluded this charter would date from after Domesday but before the Conqueror's death in 1087.¹²³ There are problems with this dating though, as Bates points out.¹²⁴ King William was not in England in 1087 meaning the charter would have to date from before the Domesday survey was complete. This, Bates argues, means that either the Domesday information was out of date, or that the information on this pre-1087 charter had subsequently been updated. Bates favours the latter explanation given that a number of other manors that were held by Bec in Domesday are not mentioned in this charter. The monks of Bec are indeed recorded as holding Swyncombe of Miles in Domesday indicating that this transaction had occurred

¹²⁰ *Historia*, ii, pp. 158-9; Salter, 'Two Deeds', p. 73.

¹²¹ See below, section 3.1.3.

¹²² GDB, fol. 159v.

¹²³ Salter, 'Two Deeds', p. 73. The descent of these manors seems to have followed the rest of William of Sulham's lands to the fitzAmaury family. See below, chapter 3.1.4.

¹²⁴ *Regesta*, p. 559.

by 1086.¹²⁵ High Wycombe is mentioned in the charter as being Miles's property, while in Domesday it was held by Robert d'Oilly, which would be explicable if the charter was amended subsequently.¹²⁶ Despite this evidence of later interpolation, this charter is of significant value. It lists a number of Miles Crispin's demesne manors, as well as those of two of his tenants, which is significant in understanding the structure of his honour, and which will be addressed below.

The second known aspect of Miles's activities was his patronage of Abingdon Abbey in Berkshire. Bec was not the only religious foundation of which Miles was a benefactor. The Abingdon chronicle describes a transaction made shortly before his death in 1107.

Milo Crispin, pro servitio quod abbas Faritius ei in sua infirmitate impenderat, dedit in eleemosynam ecclesie Sancte Marie, et monachis in Abbendonia, quoddam hospitium in via Lundonie apud Colebroc, in quo manebat quidam vocabulo Ægelwardus, et dimidiam hidam terre pariter cum omnibus illi adjacentibus pratis, pascuis, et silvis. Et misit Abbendonie suum dapiferum Gillebertum Pipard cum capellano suo Warino, et per eorum manus donum hujus rei super altare Sancte Marie imponi iussit, in presentia domni abbatis et totius conventus ecclesie, anno videlicet vii. Henrici regis.¹²⁷

[For service which Abbot Faritius devoted to him in his illness, Miles Crispin gave in alms to the abbey, to the church of Saint Mary, and the monks of Abingdon, a house (in which lived a man named Ægelwardus) at Colnbrook on the road to London, and half a hide of land with all attached woods, meadows, pastures. And he sent his steward Gilbert Pippard to Abingdon with Warin his chaplain and he ordered his gifts to be placed on the altar in the presence of the lord abbot and the whole convent of the church, in the seventh year of the reign of King Henry (5 August 1106 – 4 August 1107).]

Although the Abingdon Chronicle was written in the 1160s, it was concerned with preserving information about the abbey's lands and rights as well as providing a narrative

¹²⁵ GDB, fol. 159v.

¹²⁶ GDB, fol. 149.

¹²⁷ *Historia*, ii, pp. 142-3. Translation adapted from Hudson.

of the church's history. It was probably based on documents in the abbey's possession as well as on the collective memory of the monks transmitted orally.¹²⁸ Given the level of specific detail in this account, it is likely this entry was based on a reliable source.

Apart from providing a fascinating indication of the way in which grants to religious houses might be made in early twelfth-century England, this is very valuable evidence both for Miles's religious patronage, local connections and household. It shows Miles's connection with the pre-Conquest Benedictine foundation at Abingdon. While most of his religious patronage was directed towards his ancestral foundation at Bec, he unsurprisingly had dealings with the neighbouring abbey at Abingdon, to which a number of his tenants directed gifts of land and tithes.¹²⁹ It was at Abingdon that he spent Easter 1084, along with Robert d'Oilly and the Conqueror's youngest son, Henry, conceivably the wedding feast of Miles and Matilda d'Oilly.¹³⁰ His attendance at this occasion and the gift of land at Colnbrook, suggest a close connection between Miles and Abingdon. Abbot Fauritius is known to have been a physician who treated King Henry I;¹³¹ a service with which he could have provided Miles also, which as we have seen may reflect Miles's connections with the royal court.

This account of Miles's gift is also the earliest information we have concerning his household. The account gives the name of both his steward [*dapifer*], Gilbert Pippard, and his chaplain, Warin. A man named Warin is known to have been a chaplain of Miles's successor, Brian fitzCount, and may well have been the same person.¹³²

¹²⁸ Ibid., pp. xvi-xvii, xxvi-xix.

¹²⁹ See below chapter 3.1.

¹³⁰ Keats-Rohan, 'Devolution', p. 314.

¹³¹ *Historia*, ii, p. lxv.

¹³² See chapter 3.2.

Gilbert Pippard, as it will be shown, was the ancestor of a prominent family of knightly tenants of the honour of Wallingford in the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The Career of Miles Crispin

As the castellan of Wallingford, and the lord of the extensive lands detailed in the previous chapter, Miles Crispin was clearly a powerful magnate in the south midland counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire and the surrounding area. In this early period after the Conquest it is difficult for the historian to distinguish between formal and informal power structures. The possibility that Wigod's lands were associated with his office is discussed above, and we do not know the terms by which Miles held the castle at Wallingford. Marriage and descent, as we have seen, played an important part in the honour's early history, though offices that had once been transferable, namely those of earl and to a lesser extent, sheriff, became increasingly hereditary in the Anglo-Norman period. It may be, as Keats-Rohan suggests, that Miles had succeeded to Wigod's office and the estates that went with it.¹³³ Whether through landed power alone, or through office, Miles would have effectively played an important role in local government.

Miles would have been a valuable military asset to either side in the disputes between the sons of William the Conqueror, being, as he was, in possession of a castle of strategic significance. His apparent lack of landed property in Normandy may have made him a valuable ally for William Rufus and Henry I, who needed to defend their own positions against the supporters of their brother, Duke Robert of Normandy. The greater

¹³³ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 57, 63.

magnates of the Anglo-Norman realm who had estates both in England and Normandy had an interest in maintaining good relations with the ruler of Normandy; an interest which could have undermined their support for the kings between the Conqueror's death in 1087 and the battle of Tinchebray in 1104.¹³⁴

There is evidence that Miles attended the king during his career. The earliest mention of Miles in royal service, if it is accurate, is his attendance on William I's young son, Henry at Abingdon at Easter, 1084. He also witnessed three charters of William I, one of which related to England, as we have seen.¹³⁵ He went on to witness three charters of William Rufus (though one of these is spurious) and three of Henry I, all datable to the five year period between 1088 and 1101.¹³⁶ These are summarised in Appendix 4.

Miles was one of only two (in the spurious charter), three and five witnesses to each respective charter of William Rufus, suggesting that he was a prominent figure and one close to the king rather than just one of many attendees at an occasion, as may have been the case with his earlier attestations of William I's charters. Apart from the charter in favour of St Mary's Church at York, the reliability of which has been doubted, the remaining two dealt with Westminster Abbey and the manor of Staines, both of which were in Middlesex, where Miles had landed interests.¹³⁷

In the reign of Rufus's brother, Henry I, there is greater evidence of a connection to the king. Of the three charters of King Henry that Miles witnessed, one was issued at Salisbury, one at Marlborough, and one at Dover, and none of them were of direct relevance to Miles himself; rather they dealt with matters in Yorkshire and Tewkesbury.

¹³⁴ Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings*, pp. 14-15.

¹³⁵ *Regesta*, no. 166. 167, 176.

¹³⁶ *RRAN*, i, nos. 313, 454, 455; ii, nos. 496, 497, 515, 813.

¹³⁷ Miles Crispin had a house at Colnbrook near Staines in Middlesex, on the road to London, which he gave at some point to the abbot of Abingdon. *Historia*, ii, pp. 142-3.

Only Marlborough was near any of Miles's own estates, suggesting that rather than merely being attendant on the king as the court passed through his area, Miles had travelled to the the court. His position at the court of Henry I is further evidenced by the fact that he was one of eleven men standing surety for Henry I in the treaty he agreed with Robert, count of Flanders at Dover on 10 March 1101.¹³⁸

The evidence of witness lists is limited, firstly in that only a small proportion of the charters of these kings have survived, and secondly in that with few original copies, it is not always possible to tell whether the testing clauses are complete or accurate.¹³⁹ But the royal charter witness lists are not the only evidence that Miles had a close relationship with the crown in this period. Two things suggest that Miles enjoyed a significant relationship with the kings of England beyond his charter attestations. The first has been mentioned already; namely Miles's attendance on William the Conqueror's younger son Henry at Abingdon in 1084. Miles seems to have been considered by the king a suitable person to attend on his fifteen-year-old son after the death of the boy's mother in 1083.¹⁴⁰ Miles may have developed a relationship with the future king at this early date. They later shared the services of the same renowned physician; Abingdon's abbot, Faritius.¹⁴¹

The second piece of evidence for Miles's royal favour is his enjoyment of royal patronage. His ability to increase the size of his landed estates considerably is most likely to have been the result of his favour with the king. The ability of Miles to add portions of the Domesday estates of Robert d'Oilly and Earl Roger of Montgomery to his own demonstrates this favour. There may well have been family connections in both of

¹³⁸ *RRAN*, ii, no. 515.

¹³⁹ Bates, 'Prosopographical Study of Anglo-Norman Royal Charters', pp. 89-90.

¹⁴⁰ Green, *Henry I*, p. 23.

¹⁴¹ Green, *Henry I*, pp. 7, 67, 130, 239, 262; *Historia*, ii, p. lxvi.

these cases; Miles's wife, Matilda, was the daughter of Robert d'Oilly and may have been considered his heir, while Alfred, the nephew of Wigod, and a kinsman of Matilda was a tenant of Earl Roger in Middlesex and of Miles Crispin in Oxfordshire. Both of these provide some basis for a claim by Miles Crispin, especially the former; but both are much more tenuous than a straightforward claim to inheritance. As Holt has pointed out, the more distant the potential succession was, the greater the king's ability to intrude in it for political reasons.¹⁴² That Miles was able to increase the size of his landed property by approximately forty-percent in terms of Domesday hidage from 1086 to 1107 clearly shows a high degree of royal favour.¹⁴³

Miles Crispin and the Lands of Robert d'Oilly

At some stage after the Domesday survey, Miles gained a major share of Robert d'Oilly's Domesday holdings. Approximately sixty percent of Robert's Domesday holdings formed part of the honour of Wallingford in 1166. The remaining forty percent was held by the d'Oilly family at the start of the thirteenth century, having passed to Robert's brother Nigel, then to Nigel's son, Robert (II) d'Oilly of Hook Norton. The relationship between Miles Crispin, Robert d'Oilly and their relation-by-marriage, and pre-Conquest antecessor, Wigod of Wallingford, has been examined.¹⁴⁴ Miles probably acquired Robert's lands shortly after the latter's death in c.1092.

This suggests that much of the land Robert was recorded as holding in Domesday was held as a life-interest through marriage. Such an arrangement was explicitly stated in

¹⁴² Holt, 'Politics and Property', p. 127.

¹⁴³ Miles Crispin held lands assessed at 463 hides in Domesday. The lands that were part of the honour of Wallingford by 1107 were valued at 659 hides in Domesday.

¹⁴⁴ See above, sections 1.1.1 and 1.2.1.

the Domesday entry for Iver in Buckinghamshire where it was stated that Robert held ‘of the fee of his wife’ *de feudo suae feminae*.¹⁴⁵ The evidence is insufficient to reach a precise conclusion as to why and how the lords of Wallingford came to hold sixty percent of the landed wealth of Robert d’Oilly while the later d’Oillys held a much smaller part. Nevertheless, it is possible to speculate on what was going on here. Normal inheritance practice tended to distinguish between acquisition and inheritance. Inherited land tended to pass to the eldest son, while acquisitions could be used to endow younger sons and other kin.¹⁴⁶ The transfer of land in this instance may be more explicable if Robert d’Oilly regarded the land he gained through marriage to Wigod of Wallingford’s daughter as his inheritance, and treated the rest of his property, acquired during his lifetime, as his acquisition. If so, he may well have settled this acquired land on his nearest male relative, while his inheritance passed on to his only heir, Matilda, and her husband. The Domesday evidence does not allow anything more than speculation on this point, though there is nothing to suggest the contrary. All of Robert d’Oilly’s lands that name Wigod, Toki or Beorhtric as an *antecessor*, passed to Wallingford;¹⁴⁷ and although the land acquired by the lords of Wallingford from Robert d’Oilly’s Domesday holding was not made up entirely of these antecessors’ lands, it is possible the bulk of them came to Robert through the hands of Wigod of Wallingford and his daughter.

¹⁴⁵ GDB, fol. 149.

¹⁴⁶ Holt, ‘Politics and Property’, p. 12.

¹⁴⁷ Toki was Wigod’s son, and Beorhtric’s lands may have passed to Wigod of Wallingford after the Conquest. See above, p. 57.

Miles Crispin and the Lands of Robert of Bellême

Another great influx of land into the honour of Wallingford came with the Middlesex estates of Earl Roger de Montgomery. The most likely date for the transfer of these lands is around 1102 when English lands of Roger's son and heir, Robert de Bellême, were forfeited as a result of his rebellion against Henry I in favour of Robert Curthose.¹⁴⁸ There is no evidence to prove this, but the most likely possibility is that Henry I granted the Middlesex lands of Earl Robert to Miles Crispin. The reason these lands passed to Miles may have been to do with their connection to Wigod of Wallingford. Matilda's kinsman, Alfred, nephew of Wigod, and tenant of Miles Crispin in Oxfordshire, held fifteen hides under Earl Roger in 1086, nearly half of the thirty-seven hides Earl Roger held in the county.¹⁴⁹ Twenty-four of the thirty-seven hides had a known connection to Wigod of Wallingford, belonging to him, his commended men and sokemen, or to his son Toki. Nine hides belonged to a man named Ulf, while the remaining five hides belonged to sokemen of Wulfweard and Albert Lothariensis, and to Alwine, the man of Wulfsige filius Manni. Miles Crispin presumably gained these lands as a result of a royal grant, perhaps as a result of a successful petition by Miles, perhaps on the grounds that Wigod was his *antecessor*, or that it was land belonging to his wife's grandfather. A third possibility is that the king granted the lands of one of Miles's tenants to him allowing Miles to consolidate his lordship. Precisely how Earl Roger came to hold these lands in the first place is unclear, though another nephew of Wigod, Thorvald, held of the Earl in Gloucestershire.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ Thompson, 'Bellême, Robert de'.

¹⁴⁹ GDB, fol. 129.

¹⁵⁰ Williams, *The English*, p. 102.

1.2.3 The Management of the Honour

Attention will now be turned to the way in which the lords of Wallingford managed their lands. This section will examine the balance and distribution of demesne and tenanted land within Miles Crispin's honour as recorded in Domesday. The 107 manors of Miles Crispin can be regarded as the core of the later honour of Wallingford, and accounted for the bulk of its make-up in the early twelfth century.¹⁵¹ Twenty-six of these manors, worth £235 in total, had no subtenants and may be assumed to have been held in demesne by Miles. The remaining eighty-two manors, worth nearly £200 in total, had recorded tenants, the majority of these being named with only a few Buckinghamshire manors recording unnamed tenants. So about forty-five percent of the honour in terms of value enfeoffed, with fifty-five per cent remaining in demesne. In terms of hidage, fifty-two percent of the honour had been enfeoffed.

Miles kept the larger estates in demesne. The mean value of Miles's demesne manors was £9, with only two worth less than £1. This is in contrast to the average of £2 10s for enfeoffed holdings. Only four enfeoffed manors, Chesterton (Oxfordshire) and Beddington (Surrey) both held by tenants named William, and Chilton Foliat and Draycot Foliat (Wiltshire), both held by Reginald Canute, were assessed at ten hides or more.¹⁵² This compares to ten manors of more than ten hides Miles held in demesne. Of course, it

¹⁵¹ Miles's demesne and tenanted lands are summarised in Appendix 5.

¹⁵² GDB, fols. 159v, 36v, 71.

may be that demesne manors were more valuable precisely because they were demesne manors and therefore were under more intense management. However, the majority of these manors' *TRE* values were little different, with the average value for a demesne manor being £8, and for a tenanted holding, £2 12s. If the values in 1086 had not changed a great deal from the pre-Conquest period, it can be concluded that Miles reserved the most valuable manors for himself, generally granting out to tenants much smaller parcels of land, on average less than a third of the size.

The demesne manors were geographically dispersed, with at least one in every county in which he held land (See Figure 4). Overall the distribution of Miles's demesne in terms of hidage is set out in the table below.

Figure 4. Map of Miles Crispin's demesne and enfeoffed manors in 1086

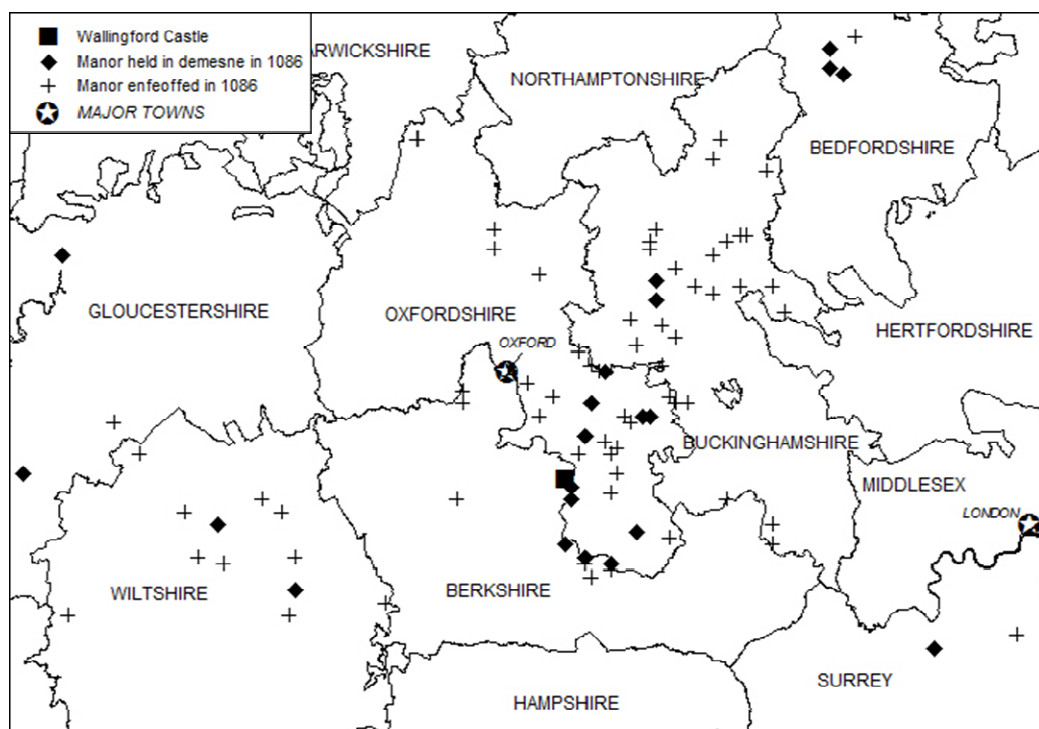


Table 4. The distribution of demesne land of Miles Crispin

Shire	Number of Manors	Number of Manors in demesne	Value of manors in demesne (£)	Total Value (£)	Demesne as % of Crispin Honour (Value)	Hidage in demesne	Total Hidage	Demesne as % of Crispin Honour (Hidage)
Oxfordshire	33	10	102	196	52%	96.3	180.9	53%
Buckinghamshire	36	3	47	104	45%	44.5	122.9	36%
Wiltshire	14	2	24	58	41%	22.0	71.0	31%
Berkshire	9	1	5	28	18%	7.0	47.3	15%
Bedfordshire	4	3	25	25.5	98%	6.1	6.4	96%
Surrey	2	1	4	13	31%	5.0	30.0	17%
Gloucestershire	4	2	7	11	64%	2.5	4.5	56%
Total	102	22	214	436	-	183	463	-
Average					50%			43%

The table shows how the distribution of demesne land in terms of both value and hidage, varied greatly from county to county. Leaving Bedfordshire and Gloucestershire aside, Oxfordshire contained the greatest concentration of land in total, as well as of demesne land, perhaps surprisingly considering Miles was castellan of Wallingford in Berkshire.¹⁵³ Berkshire, along with Buckinghamshire and Wiltshire, with thirty to thirty five percent demesne land each, are relatively below the average but still close, and each of these three counties contained a sizable proportion of the honour's land. Bedfordshire, Surrey and (to a lesser extent) Gloucestershire do not conform to the overall pattern, with the proportion of demesne in the former peculiarly high, and that of Surrey peculiarly low. These variations are not surprising as they consist of a small number of individual outlying manors. Even Surrey's thirty hides were to be found in only two manors, one of five hides at Chessington held in demesne, and the other of twenty-five hides at

¹⁵³ NB These calculations do not include Miles's urban property.

THE ORIGIN AND FORMATION OF THE HONOUR TO 1107

Beddington held by William son of Tuold.¹⁵⁴ The bulk of the Crispin honour therefore lay in the four counties of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire, with Miles's demesne manors spread throughout, though with a slightly greater concentration in Oxfordshire.

With the inclusion of well over half of Robert d'Oilly's former lands in the honour, probably from 1092, the size of Miles Crispin's holdings was substantially increased. The manors that, from later evidence, can be assumed to have passed to the honour of Wallingford at this time are set out in the table below.

Table 5. Manors held by Robert d'Oilly in 1086 which later formed part of the honour of Wallingford (with those kept in demesne by Miles in bold)

Shire	Vill	TRE landholder	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRW value (£)
<u>Demesne Estates</u>					
Oxfordshire	Bicester	-	-	15.5	16
Oxfordshire	Drayton (later Treton)	-	-	10	7
Oxfordshire	Goring	Wigod	-	20	15
Oxfordshire	Watlington	-	-	8	10
Gloucestershire	Little Rissington	Siward	-	10	8
Gloucestershire	Upper Turkdean	Siward	-	5.625	5
Buckinghamshire	High Wycombe	Beorhtric	-	10	26
Buckinghamshire	Iver	Toki	-	11.25	14.5
Buckinghamshire	Iver	1 sokeman of Queen Edith	-	2.5	3.25
Buckinghamshire	Iver	1 sokeman of Sæwulf	-	2.5	3.25
Buckinghamshire	Iver	1 sokeman of Toki	-	0.75	1
Berkshire	Ardington	Sæwine	-	9	16
Berkshire	Ardington	Eadwine	-	5	4
Berkshire	Letcombe Bassett	Wigod	-	10	16
Total				120.1	145

¹⁵⁴ GDB, fol. 36v.

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<u>Enfeoffed Estates</u>					
Buckinghamshire	Marsworth	Beorhtric, a thegn of King Edward	Ralph Basset	20	20
Buckinghamshire	Oakley	Ælfgyth, a maid	Robert fitz Walter	2.5	3
Hertfordshire	Tiscott	2 sokemen	Ralph Basset	1.5	0
Northamptonshire	Thenford	-	Roger	1	1.5
Oxfordshire	Lewknor	-	Peter	1	1
Oxfordshire	Ludwell	-	Reginald	1.5	0.25
Oxfordshire	Rousham	-	Reginald	3.25	4
Oxfordshire	Stratton Audley	-	Alweard	5	3
Oxfordshire	Upper Heyford	-	Roger de Chesney	10	12
Oxfordshire	Wheatfield	-	Peter	2	1
Total				47.75	45.75

Most of the manors that had belonged to Robert d'Oilly in 1086 that have no recorded tenant seem to have been enfeoffed by the time Miles granted the tithes of his demesne to Bec, with only Iver and High Wycombe remaining in demesne by that time.¹⁵⁵

This chapter has explored the process of conquest and colonisation in the decades after the Norman invasion. The case of the honour of Wallingford shows that there was great complexity. The extant account of the honour's origins provides some suggestion of continuity, but further analysis shows that land-grabbing and royal patronage may also have been significant. The most likely explanation is that the honour of the twelfth century was formed through a combination of processes and methods, the details of which are obscured by the nature of the evidence.

¹⁵⁵ Salter, 'Two Deeds', pp. 74, 76-78. See above, p. 60. The history of Watlington before the thirteenth century is unknown, but was by then a demesne manor linked with the honour.

2 INHERITANCE AND PATRONAGE: THE DESCENT OF THE HONOUR, 1107–1154

The descent of the honour of Wallingford to 1154 provides an interesting perspective from which to examine the descent of property in Anglo-Norman England, which remains a subject of debate among historians. George Garnett's recent work argues that the Norman Conquest introduced into England a radically new system of land tenure that was dependent on the king who became the lord of all land in the kingdom by right of Conquest.¹ As such there was in this view, substantial royal control over succession of tenants-in-chief during this period. Such an interpretation re-affirms the views of R.H.C. Davis who argued in 1964 that the troubles of Stephen's reign were a result of the tenants-in-chief 'reacting against the notion that their lands were merely tenements which they held at the king's pleasure' and demanding 'that the King should recognize their hereditary right in specific and unambiguous terms'.² Indeed, it has been argued that the Angevin party emphasised the right of a woman to succeed her father as lawful heir, and that this concern was underneath all the rhetoric of Brian fitzCount and Gilbert Foliot, the chief sources for the intellectual justification of the Angevin cause through their correspondence.³

In contrast to the views expressed by Garnett, a number of historians have emphasised the strong customary rights landholders enjoyed and the cultural assumptions that meant hereditary tenure was often assumed by all parties and that it was only in exceptional circumstances of political turmoil or instances of disputed inheritance that the

¹ Garnett, *Conquered England*.

² Davis, 'What happened in Stephen's reign?', pp. 201-2.

³ Chibnall, *Matilda*, pp. 85-7; Crouch, *Reign of King Stephen*, pp. 123-6.

king could intervene in practice.⁴ Recent historians of the civil war of Stephen's reign have also downplayed the significance of Davis's arguments as to the centrality of inheritance rights in the causes of the civil war.⁵ The descent of the honour of Wallingford provides important evidence to help illuminate these questions.

This chapter describes the descent and lordship of the honour down to the accession of Henry II to the throne in 1154. During the reign of Henry I, Wallingford became the power-base of Brian fitzCount, who famously held it for the Angevin cause throughout the civil war of Stephen's reign. Brian's lordship of Wallingford was the result of royal patronage but was also dependant on his marriage to Matilda of Wallingford, Miles's widow and the granddaughter of Wigod of Wallingford; an extraordinary example of the interplay of heredity, marriage and royal patronage made especially interesting in light of Brian's own passionate and eloquent defence of the Empress Matilda's hereditary right to succeed her father as ruler of England. Brian and Matilda apparently died childless, and Wallingford passed to the Empress's son, Henry, duke of Normandy and count of Anjou, who ascended the throne in 1154 and who, it will be argued, commissioned the survey that contains the earliest reference to 'the honour of Wallingford' as an entity.

⁴ Holt, 'Property and Politics', pp. 3-52; Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, pp. 59-62; 148-153; Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 48-74.

⁵ For summary, see Crouch, *Reign of King Stephen*, pp. 121-132.

2.1 BRIAN FITZCOUNT

Miles died in around 1107.⁶ He was survived by his wife, Matilda, apparently the daughter of Robert d'Oilly and granddaughter of Wigod of Wallingford. Matilda would have been one of the wealthiest widows in England. The account of 1212 describing the descent of the honour, which has been discussed in relation to the marriages of Robert d'Oilly and Miles Crispin, continues with a description of the subsequent descent of the honour.

Mortuo Milone, dedit dominus Rex Henricus primus predictam Mathillidem Briennio filio Comitis pariter cum hereditate sua. Ipse ex ea nullum habuit heredem. Idem Briennius et prefata Mathillis uxor eius tempore Regis Stephani reddiderunt se religioni et dominus Henricus, filius Mathillidis Imperatricis, qui eo tempore fuit dux Normannie saisivit predictum honorem.⁷

[On Miles's death, the Lord King Henry the First gave the said Matilda to Brian fitzCount together with her inheritance. He had no heirs from her. The same Brian and the aforementioned Matilda, his wife, gave themselves to religion in the time of King Stephan and the Lord Henry, son of the Empress Matilda, who was at that time duke of Normandy seised the said honor.]

The reliability of this source was discussed in the previous chapter which concludes that there is probably some truth to its account of events.⁸ Brian was certainly lord of Wallingford during the reign of Henry I and was an important political figure in the troubles of King Stephen's reign.⁹ The plausibility of his marriage to Matilda, Miles's widow, has been questioned on chronological grounds. Admittedly, Matilda could have to have been as old as forty years in 1107 if her date of birth were around 1066 after Robert d'Oilly and Edith's marriage. Alternatively, she may have married Miles Crispin as a young child and be only slightly older than Brian who could have been

⁶ 1107 is usually stated as the year in which he died but this seems to have been assumed from the reference to his illness in that year in the Abingdon Cronicle; see above, p. 65. He is certainly absent from records after that date.

⁷ *Book of Fees*, p. 116.

⁸ See above, section 1.2.1.

⁹ E. King, 'Brian fitz Count (c.1090–c.1149)', *ODNB*.

as young as seventeen if Edmund King's estimate of his birth date as *circa* 1090 is correct. But even if Matilda were forty and Brian seventeen, the age difference, though it may have been uncommon, is certainly not implausible, especially considering two important factors: firstly, that the purpose of the marriage was to endow one of Henry I's trusted *curiales* with a landed power-base; and secondly, that the account itself states that they produced no heirs. Her seniority may also be indicated in the level of independence in religious patronage she demonstrated throughout the rest of her life, and which will be discussed below. First, however, it will be instructive to sketch what is known of Brian's career.

Brian fitzCount's origins are not easily discernable, though he was perhaps an illegitimate son of Alan (IV) Fergant, duke of Brittany. A letter of Brian himself suggests that he began his career as a landless member of Henry I's household.¹⁰ In a letter that is datable from its subject matter to c. 1141, Brian wrote to Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester, evidently in response to a lost letter of the bishop complaining of Brian's conduct. Brian's letter passionately defends not just his own actions, but also the lay aristocracy as a whole, which he compares favourably to the English bishops and the poor leadership they had shown by supporting Stephen's accession. Part of his defence was that he and others were being loyal to the old king, Henry I, of whom Brian states 'gave me land'.¹¹ This was a recurring theme for Brian. He also uses the phrase: 'I Brian fitzCount, whom good King Henry brought up and to whom he gave arms and an

¹⁰ Davis, 'Henry of Blois and Brian Fitz-Count', pp. 301-303; King, 'Memory of Brian fitz Count', pp. 75-98.

¹¹ Davis, 'Henry of Blois and Brian Fitz-Count', p. 302: *Rex Henricus dedit mihi terram.*

honour'.¹² A letter Gilbert Foliot wrote in response to one he received from Brian survives. Foliot was supportive of Brian's cause and wrote that Henry I 'brought you up from boyhood, educated you, knighted you, enriched you'.¹³ Although there was a rhetorical element to the arguments used in these letters, it does seem that Brian was brought up in the royal household without any inheritance, and that Henry's patronage allowed him to gain the honour of Wallingford through marriage to Miles Crispin's widow, Matilda. In light of Davis and Chibnall's arguments that Brian and his fellow Angevin supporters were concerned primarily with inheritance rights, it is telling that he makes no mention in any of his known correspondence of his wife or that he held in right of her. He states that his honour was given to him by the king.

Brian does seem to have been close to Henry I. His earliest recorded appearance is in the witness list of a charter of the king dated 13 September 1114 at Westbourne in Sussex.¹⁴ This is the first of thirty-seven extant charters of Henry I attested by Brian during the course of the reign. Of those where the place of issue was recorded, sixteen of these were issued in England, while eighteen were issued in Normandy, showing that Brian was a member of Henry I's court who travelled with the king across the Anglo-Norman realm. He seems to have been at court regularly from 1125 onwards. He was at Woodstock and Rockingham in 1126 immediately after Henry I's daughter returned to England from Germany, and was probably at Windsor on 1 January 1127 when she was

¹² Ibid., p. 303: *ego Brientius filius Comitiss, quem bonum Rex Henricus nutriuit, et cui arma dedit et honorem.*

¹³ King, 'Memory of Brian fitz Count', p. 85; *Gilbert Foliot Letters*, no. 26: *Non est tibi elapsum a memoria quod te promouit a puero, quod iuuenum educauit, et donatum militie cingulo, donis et honoribus ampliavit.*

¹⁴ *RRAN*, ii, no. 1062.

designated Henry's lawful successor.¹⁵ In May 1127 he and Earl Robert of Gloucester accompanied the Empress to Rouen to marry Geoffrey, count of Anjou.¹⁶ Brian and Earl Robert were commissioned to undertake a special audit of the treasury in 1128/9. Brian was evidently an important courtier under Henry I.

In the pipe poll of 1130, he is recorded as having exemptions from geld on 720 hides in eleven counties, most of which lay in the honour of Wallingford, but he also held, or was given, the marcher lordships of Abergavenny and Upper Gwent.¹⁷ Once in the reign of Henry I and then in two further charters of King Stephen, Brian is styled *constabularius*.¹⁸ This could refer to his office in the royal household, though it could refer to a local office. In the 1130 pipe roll, Brian gave £166 13s 4d for the office and part of the land of Nigel d'Oilly, who had been constable of Oxford. Katherine Keats-Rohan has pointed out that little is known of the office of constable, and has suggested that the position may have been associated with the pre-Conquest office of staller, which may itself, have been held by Wigod of Wallingford.¹⁹

Brian's closeness to the king and his family and his membership of a small group of magnates who assisted Henry I in arranging for the Empress to succeed to the throne, sets the context for his ardent support for the Angevins during the civil war of Stephen's reign. Although he accepted Stephen of Blois's accession initially, witnessing five royal charters of Stephen between 1136 and 1138,²⁰ he gave his allegiance to the Empress

¹⁵ *RRAN*, ii, nos. 1459, 1463; King, 'Brian fitzCount'.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ King, 'Brian fitz Count'; *Pipe Roll 31 Henry I*, pp. 3-6, 21-3, 39, 49, 51-2, 62, 76, 79, 80, 84, 86, 101-4, 125, 129, 130, 150-2.

¹⁸ *RRAN*, ii, no. 1688; iii, nos. 271, 944.

¹⁹ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 56-7. See chapter 1, above.

²⁰ *RRAN*, iii, nos. 271, 314, 383, 385, 944; King, 'Brian fitzCount'.

when she landed in England in 1139 and witnessed fifteen of her charters.²¹ He remained loyal to the Angevin party for the rest of his life, and Wallingford Castle came to be at the centre of the civil war between King Stephen and the Empress.²² Wallingford was part of a network of Angevin castles that included Devizes, Sherborne, Malmesbury, Oxford, and Marlborough, and which penned Stephen in to the Thames Valley and his powerbase at London. The furthest east and closest of these castles to London, Wallingford was an Angevin presence thrust into enemy territory and a continual nuisance to Stephen.

The survival of Brian's impassioned letter is unusual for a layman of his position in this period, but other than this, we have little documentary evidence of Brian's actions other than royal charters. Only two charters issued by Brian are extant. One was printed by Bishop Kennet in the eighteenth century who dated it to 1143. It concerns the granting of the church of Hillingdon in Middlesex to Evesham Abbey and is discussed in the following chapter.²³ The other is interesting in that it was issued alongside his wife, Matilda, by whose right it has been argued, he held the honour.

2.2 MATILDA OF WALLINGFORD

Matilda of Wallingford dominates the remaining records of the honour of Wallingford in the years between 1107 and 1154. On her seal, which still survives, she styled herself *Matildis domina de Walingford*. Four of Matilda's charters are extant, all of them

²¹ *RRAN*, iii, nos. 68, 274, 275, 316a, 343, 368, 370, 371, 393, 497, 634, 651, 699, 911.

²² Slade, 'Wallingford Castle in the Reign of Stephen', pp. 33-43.

²³ See below, p. 124.

relating to the abbey of Bec in Normandy.²⁴ Bec, as we have seen, was a religious foundation with very long-standing links to the Crispin family, and it is interesting to note that even while she was married to Brian fitzCount, a Breton with no other known connection to Bec, she was still patronising her first husband's family foundation. Despite her second marriage to one of the most important political figures of the period, Matilda's status as the *domina* of Wallingford seems always to have been recognised. She issued charters authenticated by her own seal and in her own name even while married to Brian fitzCount, and all surviving charters relating to the honour of Wallingford refer to Brian and Matilda jointly.

Figure 5. Seal of Matilda of Wallingford²⁵



The earliest of the four Bec charters is a grant of the Wiltshire manors of Little Ogbourne and Great Ogbourne to the abbey. This is datable to before 1133 when it was confirmed by Henry I at Rouen.²⁶ It was issued in the name of *Brienis filius Comitis et M[atildis] uxoris*, jointly. This is the only extant charter that uses this style, although the record of a grant of land at Wroxton to Abingdon Abbey made by Richard son of

²⁴ *Select Documents*, nos. 37, 46, 47, 48.

²⁵ College of St. George, Windsor: SGC XI.G.1.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, nos. 37; 18.

Rainfrid states that it was made with the consent of his lord Brian and his lady Matilda.²⁷

In both of these instances, Brian and Matilda are named together.

The remaining three Bec charters were issued by Matilda, under her seal. One, probably dating from after the 1133 confirmation, re-grants Great and Little Ogbourne to Bec, this time with the assent and praise of Brian (*ego Mathildis de Warenguefort assentiente pariter ac laudente Briento filio comitis coniuge scilicet meo*).²⁸ The reason the same gift had to be granted a second time is unclear, but it may be a result of concerns over Brian fitzCount's ability to alienate land which was his wife's inheritance; something which was still of concern in the thirteenth century when it was argued that Brian, for the same reason, had had no right to grant Ipsden to Osmund Basset.²⁹

The remaining two charters were issued in Matilda's name alone and do not mention Brian. One of these may date to after Brian's death, and has the assent of the Empress's son, Henry of Anjou, duke of Normandy, who could have been designated the heir to Wallingford by this time.³⁰ The other is a charter addressed to 'all my men of Ogbourne both present and future' (*Sciant omnes mei homines de Occheburnia tam presentes quam futuri*); this dates from before 1147 when Ogbourne was still in Matilda's hand, and grants a virgate of land to a relative named Richard (*Ricardus cognatus meus*).³¹ This perhaps shows that Brian had died by 1147. He seems to have witnessed no royal charters after 1143.³² The Empress Matilda made a gift to Reading Abbey

²⁷ *Historia*, pp. 157-8.

²⁸ *Select Documents*, no. 47.

²⁹ 'Plea Rolls for Staffordshire: 1225-6', pp. 32-40.

³⁰ *Select Documents*, no. 48.

³¹ *Ibid.*, no. 46.

³² *RRAN*, iii, nos. 370, 371.

around the year 1144 ‘for the love and loyal service of Brian fitzCount’, and it is possible she did so for his soul.³³

The evidence of the Bec charters is significant. The re-grant of Great and Little Ogbourne under Matilda’s seal suggests that this was regarded as a more secure grant than that made jointly, despite the joint grant receiving the confirmation of the king in a charter of 1133.³⁴ If this was the case, it demonstrates the importance of Matilda as legitimate holder of the honour of Wallingford. Johns has pointed out that Matilda’s seal may be the earliest extant impression of a non-royal secular noblewoman’s seal.³⁵ She has also observed that women’s power to grant land in the context of religious patronage gave them a public role which was considerably magnified if the woman was an heiress.³⁶ This seems to have been the case here. Matilda is a striking example of a noblewoman who was active as an heiress and wife, and as a wealthy widow in the early twelfth century; a lady whose honour of Wallingford was crucial to the Angevin cause in the long period of civil war. She would have had extensive dealings with her namesake, the Empress Matilda, a married widow who also had a claim to hold land (the kingdom of England in her case) in her own right, and who styled herself, *domina Anglorum*. Part of the case that the Angevin party were making, and which Brian’s letter to Henry of Blois forcefully related, was that the crown was Matilda’s hereditary right, and that this could not be negated by Stephen’s claims. Despite the fact that Brian himself attributed his landed wealth to royal patronage in his letters to Henry of Blois and Gilbert Foliot, by

³³ Ibid., no. 703.

³⁴ Ibid., no. 18.

³⁵ Johns, *Noblewomen, Aristocracy and Power*, pp. 126, 128-29.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 159.

supporting the Empress's hereditary right to the crown, he was making the same argument upon which his wife's, and therefore his own, title to Wallingford depended.

2.3 HENRY OF ANJOU

Henry of Anjou, son of the Empress Matilda, succeeded to the lordship of Wallingford in the 1150s. The return of 1212 is careful to state that Henry succeeded to the lordship of Wallingford before he became king (*dominus Henricus, filius Mathillidis Imperatricis, qui eo tempore fuit dux Normannie saisivit predictum honorem*). This, it states, was because Brian and Matilda gave themselves to religion in the time of King Stephen (*Briennus et ... Mathillis uxor eius tempore Regis Stephani reddiderunt se religioni*). Since Brian and Matilda were childless, and Brian is lost from the evidence after the late 1140s, this is a plausible explanation. That Henry secured control of Wallingford is comprehensible on several grounds. Firstly, it may, in peaceful circumstances have escheated to the crown according to established custom. Given their attachment to the Angevin cause throughout, it is possible that Brian and Matilda would have regarded the heir of the Empress as their lord, rather than Stephen. Secondly, in the chaos of Stephen's reign, the practical considerations of war could outweigh normal legal procedures, and Henry may have been anxious to secure the control of a strategically vital lordship and could not have let it get into the wrong hands. In addition to these factors, however, the wishes of Matilda and her husband must be taken into account. Their loyalty to the Angevin cause throughout the period of war, and their close relationship to the Empress suggest that Henry's possession of Wallingford was due to the design of Brian and Matilda as much as it was the result of the other factors. Wallingford's loyalty

was recognised on Henry's accession to the throne in 1154, with a grant to the borough, of a charter of extensive privileges.³⁷

At least one charter connected with Wallingford was issued by Henry before his accession. This was a charter founding a house of Austin canons in Wallingford castle and is datable to c.1152.³⁸ The priory was probably intended to replace the existing chapel of St Nicholas, the prebends of which appear to have been founded by Miles Crispin, perhaps based on the model of St George's chapel in Oxford castle, though Roffe has suggested that the chapel in Wallingford castle had a pre-Conquest existence before the castle was constructed.³⁹ The charter of c.1152 was issued jointly by the Empress and her son states that it was for the souls of Brian and his wife Matilda who proposed the foundation. It implies that Brian and Matilda were dead, though the letter of 1212 states that they retired into religion, so may have been alive. Matilda's apparent grants to Bec after Brian's death suggest the possibility that she was still alive at this date even if Brian had died.

2.4 CONCLUSION

From 1086 until 1154 there were thus only two lords of Wallingford, both of whom were married to Matilda, apparently the daughter of Robert d'Oilly and granddaughter of Wigod of Wallingford. Matilda was therefore lady of Wallingford for more than sixty years. This represents a remarkable degree of continuity across the period as well as a

³⁷ *VCH Berkshire*, iii, p. 532.

³⁸ *RRAN*, no. 88; Walne 'A "Double Charter"', pp. 649-654.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 652; Roffe, 'Wallingford in Domesday', p. 36.

link to an important pre-Conquest royal official. However, while later generations⁴⁰ were keen to interpret the lordship of the honour as descending continually through the female line of the same family, from Wigod of Wallingford in the reign of Edward the Confessor to Brian fitzCount in the reign of Stephen, it is also possible to interpret the history of the honour in this period as one of great royal intervention and, as the previous chapter demonstrated, tenurial change. All of the lords of Wallingford were closely associated with the royal court and with local royal government. Indeed, this confirms Keats-Rohan's view that the possession of the honour and of the castle seems to have been linked throughout the period.⁴¹ Matilda's two husbands, Miles Crispin and Brian fitzCount were both closely associated with the kings of England. Miles had known Henry I since the latter's childhood, and Brian fitzCount was brought up in Henry's household. Neither can be shown to have held lands outside England, though both were members of important continental families. The circumstances of Miles's arrival in England are unknown, but it is reasonably clear that Brian's marriage to Matilda was conceived almost solely as a way of granting him the honour of Wallingford. When he died, Henry II took the castle and honour into his own possession and managed it on different terms for the rest of his reign.

On the other hand, despite the importance of royal intervention, those who saw continuity in the descent of the honour were not without foundation. None of the lords of Wallingford appear to have had any surviving legitimate children to be disinherited, and Matilda's legal title to the honour seems to have been significant in light of her issuing charters under her own seal in the lifetime of her husband. It is possible to see in this an

⁴⁰ *Book of Fees*, p. 116.

⁴¹ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', pp. 57, 63.

important factor in Brian's support for the Angevin cause in the civil war of Stephen's reign. The Empress Matilda's claim to the throne also depended on her title to her inheritance, and this concern for women's inheritance rights may go some way towards explaining Brian's support for the Empress.⁴² So, the history of the honour in the years after the Conquest demonstrates both the importance of women's property rights and the significant part played by the crown in determining the succession of the lordship of Wallingford.

⁴² Chibnall, *Matilda*, pp. 85-7; Crouch, *Reign of Stephen*, p. 126.

3 THE TENANTS OF THE HONOUR AND ITS IDENTITY, 1066-1166

Stenton argued that the Norman Conquest introduced into England a new social order, based around the great estates of the tenants-in-chief who each presided over a community of tenants bound to their lord by a common bond of homage and collective involvement in the community's business through attendance at the lord's court where they gave their lord counsel, and where he did justice.¹ This view of aristocratic society organised around great honours has been influential. The legal historians Thorne and Milsom developed Stenton's analysis, to present a view of extensive seigneurial jurisdiction where tenure was dependent on the lord and where justice in the localities was predominantly administered within seigneurial courts.² Recent work has questioned the extent to which honours were self-contained entities in this way. Mortimer's analysis of the Clare honour led him to conclude that the idea of the honour as a community had a certain artificiality and that although ties among tenants of the honour of Clare were often strong, many of them had interests outside the honour.³ Hudson has revised the views of Thorne and Milsom as to the nature of seigneurial justice, arguing that all landholders, whoever they held from, were protected to some degree by royal justice in this period and that lords' courts should be seen as part of an integrated system by which the Norman conquerors ruled.⁴ Crouch, likewise, has stressed that honorial communities were, from early on, only one of many potential elements in the way in which magnates wielded

¹ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 7-113.

² Milsom, *Legal Framework of English Feudalism*; Hudson, 'Milsom's Legal Structure', pp. 64-5; Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane', p. 186.

³ Mortimer, 'Land and Service', pp. 177-197.

⁴ Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, pp. 59-62; Hudson, *Formation*, p. 47.

power, and should be seen alongside counties, towns and their hinterlands, and looser 'affinities' made up of individuals who were not necessarily tenants.⁵

The survey recorded among the *cartae baronum* of 1166 made after Wallingford had escheated to the Crown, is the earliest use of the term 'honour of Wallingford'. It is an interestingly rare formulation; the term 'honour' tended to be used in sources of the early twelfth century exclusively in relation to a person, the Latin word, *honor*, deriving as it does from the word for 'office'. Seldom was it used to describe an entity as the term 'honour of Wallingford' came to be in the reign of Henry II.⁶ Along with its important later history, this honour therefore provides an interesting perspective from which to explore the nature and identity of an honorial community in the 1066-1166 period in light of recent scholarship. This chapter takes the tenants named in the survey recorded among the *cartae baronum* of 1166 and investigates the nature of their holdings within the honour, their family origins, and their relationship to the lords of Wallingford. From this it is possible to show how the Norman Conquest did not represent simply a change in personnel at the top, but also went deep into English local society and involved the introduction of a new foreign, military aristocracy at the very local level of manor and parish. Yet it will also be shown that the change was not sudden but gradual, and that many continuities in English local society persisted.

Identifying individuals below the level of tenant-in-chief is difficult for this period, both because they rarely had direct dealings with the crown, and because their wealth and status were often such that very little evidence of them survives. The first comprehensive post-Domesday survey that survives for the honour is the list of its

⁵ Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane,' pp. 179-200; Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 133-159.

⁶ Susan Reynolds, personal communication.

knights' fees, and those who held them, among the *cartae baronum* of 1166, produced in response to King Henry II's request for information on the numbers of knights' fees owed by individual lords.⁷ These only record the names of tenants and the numbers of knights' fees they held, and do not include the names of places. They do, nonetheless, include by-names that help many of the fees to be identified by reference to private charters, pipe rolls and later surveys of the honour. In an Appendix to his edition of the Boarstall Cartulary, published in 1936, H.E. Salter included a brief history of each of the fees of the honour with the list of the knights of the honour of 1300.⁸ What follows is a more detailed re-examination of the descent of some of the fees of the honour. The *cartae baronum* list of knights' fees will be taken as its point of departure.

The *cartae baronum* are the returns of various barons to a survey initiated by Henry II in 1166. Tenants-in-chief were asked to provide the king with information about the knights enfeoffed on their estates. Three questions were asked:

- 1) How many knights were enfeoffed before the death of Henry I?
- 2) How many knights had been enfeoffed since then?
- 3) How many knights remain on the demesne?

Only a few original returns have survived; most of the *cartae*, including that of the honour of Wallingford, exist only as entries in two thirteenth century exchequer remembrance books: the Black Book of the Exchequer and the Red Book of the Exchequer. The Black Book has been dated to the reign of King John and is thus the earliest record. It was written up using either original records or another lost *exempla*. The Red Book was produced by an exchequer official named Alexander de Swereford,

⁷ *RBE*, 308-311. The entry for Wallingford however, can be shown to be datable much earlier, probably around 1154.

⁸ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 295-327.

whose preface was dated around 1230 and states that he had been working from exchequer records. The *carta* of the honour of Wallingford, printed in Hubert Hall's edition of the Red Book, must therefore be treated with caution. Indeed, close inspection of the entry for the honour of Wallingford records information that did not derive from the 1166 survey at all.

The entry for the honour is not really a baron's *carta*, but merely a list of knights of the honour under the heading, 'knights of the honour of Wallingford'. Part of this could be explained by the fact that the honour was in royal hands in 1166 and the knights of the honour were therefore holding their fees directly of the king. But there is also evidence that the information it contains predates 1166 by a decade or more.⁹ For instance, we are told that Gilbert Basset held seven fees, but he had probably been succeeded by his son Thomas Basset before 1159.¹⁰ Also, the two fees attributed in this list to Ralph de Chesney had been given to his sister Matilda and her husband Henry fitzGerold in 1160.¹¹ It is most likely, as Salter suggested, that the list of knights of the honour that was entered into the Black and Red books, was the result of a survey carried out by Henry II in the early 1150s either when he first gained possession of the honour, or when he ascended the throne.

⁹ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 295-6.

¹⁰ *Basset Charters*, p. xxxviii.

¹¹ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 295-6.

Table 6. Knight service owed by the tenants of the honour of Wallingford, c. 1154

Name of Tenant	No. Of Knights' Fees
Nicholas Basset	10
Gilbert Basset	7
Thurstan Basset	6
William Pippard	6
Walter Canute	5
Ralph son of Amaury	4
Geoffrey de Clinton	3.33
Peter de la Mare	3
Gilbert de Bella Aqua	3
Robert son of Alan	3
Geoffrey Boterel	3
(Roger son of Alfred)	3
Gilbert Huscarl	3
Robert son of Amaury	3
bishop of Salisbury	2
John the Marshal	2
Morevanus	2
Walter Foliot	2
Hugh son of Richard	2
William de Druval	2
Richard de Chausey	2
Roland de Alverso	2
Alan de Valenes	2
Ralph de Chesney	2
Hervey Malet	1.5
Osmund Basset	1
Fulk Basset	1
Ralph de Langetot	1
Walkeline Visdeloup	1
William Corbet	1
Carbonel	1
Robert Pippard	1
Simon de Stanton	1
Gilbert son of Safrid	1
de Santresdone	1
Richer of Pangbourne	1
Miles de Antiseia	1
Haneladus de Bidun	1
Ralph Dairel	0.5
Richard de Eura	0.5
Anketil de Wycombe	0.5
Hugh son of Osbert	0.5
Stephan son of Riulf and	
Philip de Westmerdele	0.5
Hugh de la Mare	0.25
TOTAL	99.58

3.1 SOME TENANTS OF THE HONOUR, 1066–1166

In the c.1154 list, there were forty-four individuals owing a combined total of just over 99½ knights' service, plus twenty-one 'free tenants'. Most of the available sources that we have for this period deal with major tenants of the honour with larger estates or active careers. Included in the list were a number of holders of single-knights' fees and less, for whom little or no evidence is available before the late twelfth century. Ten of the major holdings in 1154 have been examined in detail, and the histories of these estates form the basis of the following discussion. These ten families can be divided into three chronologically-based categories:

1. Those in possession of estates that appear to have passed intact from a Domesday subtenant (the three knights' fees of Roger son of Alfred; the three fees of Peter de la Mare; the two fees of Hugh son of Richard; the seven fees of the fitzAmaury family, divided in 1154 between Ralph and Robert fitzAmaury; and the five fees of Walter Canute).
2. Those whose estates were created after Domesday but who were known to have been connected with Miles Crispin (holdings formed 1086-1107); these included the estates of the Basset, Pippard, and Foliot families.
3. Those who were prominent under Brian fitzCount, but for whom there is no discernable connection with Miles Crispin (holdings probably formed after 1107); namely the Boterels and Riulf de Saisson.

These categories reflect the time at which these estates, which were in existence in 1154, were created, and in many cases, though not all, the date at which the ancestors of the 1154 tenant were first settled on the honour's lands. If the same kind of 'honorial barons' Stenton observed operating in this period, were active in the honour of Wallingford, it is among this group we might expect to find them. The small numbers of charters that survive for this period, as already discussed, make it difficult to identify such people.

3.1.1 Roger son of Alfred

Of the major estates held of the honour in c.1154, that of Roger son of Alfred, was the oldest in so far as they can be traced. His ancestor, Alfred, nephew of Wigod was already established as a tenant in 1086. Alfred was the nephew of Wigod of Wallingford, and as such would have been a distant kinsman of Matilda d'Oilly. In 1154, Roger son of Alfred held three knights' fees of the honour of Wallingford at Harpsden in Oxfordshire, Eaton in Berkshire and Harlington and Ickenham in Middlesex.¹² These three fees were held by the Harpsden family, probably his descendants, throughout the thirteenth century. All of these lands were held in 1086 by Alfred, except Ickenham, which was held by three knights, and an Englishman.¹³ The Englishman, or one of the knights may well have been Alfred; his cousin, Wigod's son, Toki the housecarl held two hides at Ickenham *TRE*. Cuxham, which was held by Alfred in 1086 appears not to have belonged to this family by 1154, unless Ickenham was given in exchange for this manor at some point between 1086 and 1154. The three fees of the Harpsden family in 1166 are listed in the table below.

¹² Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 323.

¹³ GDB, fol. 129.

Table 7. The Estates of the Harpsden (fitzAlfred) Family in c.1154

Manor	1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Hides	1086 Value	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees
Harpsden, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	Alfred	5	£5	Roger son of Alfred	3
Eaton, Berkshire	Miles Crispin	Alfred	5	£3 10s		
Harlington, Middlesex	Earl Roger	Alfred	10	£5		
Ickenham, Middlesex	Earl Roger	Alfred	6	£4		
Estimated Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:			26	£17 10s		

Alfred was also a tenant-in-chief at Littlestoke and Checkendon in Oxfordshire in 1086, and though the later history of these manors is unclear, there is no evidence of them forming part of the honour of Wallingford.

3.1.2 Peter de la Mare

Peter de la Mare (*Petrus de Mara*) is recorded as owing the service of three knights in c.1154. The location of this estate can be established from the entry for his descendant, Robert de la Mare, in the list of knights of the honour in 1300, and is set out in the table:

Table 8. The Estates of the de la Mare Family

Manor	1086 Tenant-in- chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Fiscal	1086 Value (£)	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees
Marsh Baldon, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	Geoffrey	10	5	Peter de la Mare	3 fees of the honour of Wallingford
Watcombe, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	Geoffrey	2	1		
Heyford, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	Ralph	5	0		
Botolph Claydon, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Geoffrey	7.75	4		
Cherrington, Gloucestershire	Miles Crispin	Geoffrey	2	4		
Brawn, Gloucestershire	Miles Crispin	-	0.75	6	Peter de la Mare	2 fees held in chief
Lavington, Wiltshire ¹⁴	Robert Marshal	-	0	0		
Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:			27.5	20		

With the exception of Heyford in Oxfordshire and Brawn in Gloucestershire, Domesday Book states these manors were held of Miles Crispin by a man named Geoffrey. Geoffrey held twenty-one hides and three virgates of land worth £14 from Miles, at Marsh Baldon and Watcombe in Oxfordshire, Botolph Claydon in Buckinghamshire, and Cherrington in Gloucestershire.¹⁵ Brawn was a three virgate estate held by Miles in demesne in 1086, while Heyford was held by a tenant named Ralph.¹⁶ That three fees were held by Peter de la Mare in c.1154, suggests that Heyford had passed to him before that date. The estates held of Miles Crispin by Geoffrey account for nearly

¹⁴ *RBE*, i, p. 246.

¹⁵ *GDB*, fols. 159v, 150, 169v.

¹⁶ *GDB*, fols. 159v, 162v, 169v. The COEL Database suggests Ralph is the same as Ralph de Chesney who held over £60 worth of land of William de Warenne in Sussex, and Norfolk.

seven per cent of the value of land enfeoffed by Miles Crispin in 1086. It was one of the larger estates in the Domesday honour, though not the largest.

Geoffrey must have been succeeded by Robert de la Mare, who, according to the Pipe Roll of 31 Henry I, died in 1129/30, and who was succeeded in three and a half hides in Wiltshire, by his brother Henry de la Mare.¹⁷ This land in Wiltshire presumably relates to the two fees in Lavington held by Peter de la Mare, who was probably the son of Henry, in c.1154.¹⁸ Despite the two fees he owed the king for half of the manor of Lavington in Wiltshire, a considerable landed interest outside Miles Crispin's honour, Peter did witness, with other principal tenants of the honour, the charter of Matilda of Wallingford, granting Ogbourne to Bec datable to 1133x47.¹⁹ Peter de la Mare and his son Robert did grant a virgate of land to Eynsham Abbey in Oxfordshire.²⁰ Peter died in 1168-72 when he was succeeded in his Wiltshire lands (presumably as well as in his Wallingford lands) by Robert.²¹

3.1.3 Hugh son of Richard son of Rainfrid

In 1300, an estate consisting of the manors of Chearsley, Ickford and Upton in Buckinghamshire, and Draycot, Alkerton and Wroxton, in Oxfordshire, was held for two knights' fees.²² With the exception of Upton, all these manors were held in Domesday by

¹⁷ *Pipe Roll 31 Henry I*, pp. 4, 20; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 321.

¹⁸ *RBE*, i, p. 246; *VCH Wiltshire*, x, p. 87.

¹⁹ *Select Documents*, no. 47.

²⁰ *Eynsham*, i, no. 134.

²¹ *Pipe Roll 19 Henry II*, p. 78.

²² Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' no. 63.

a man called Richard.²³ A charter of William the Conqueror confirming a grant of tithes by Richard son of Rainfrid to the abbey of Bec in Normandy, shows Richard son of Rainfrid to have been in possession of Ickford and Alkerton, as well as Appleton in Berkshire.²⁴ Appleton and Eaton in Berkshire were also held of Miles Crispin by Richard in 1086.²⁵ The Hugh son of Richard mentioned in c.1154 is confirmed as the Domesday Richard's son by the Abingdon chronicle, which records the gift of two hides at Wroxton in Oxfordshire (which was probably part of Richard's neighbouring Domesday manor of Alkerton) to the abbey on the death of his father in 1115/6.²⁶ In the thirteenth century, and possibly by 1154, the one and a half hide estate at Upton in Buckinghamshire was held with these estates.²⁷ In 1086 Upton was held of Miles by its pre-Conquest holder, Alric, and could have been appropriated by Richard or his son sometime between 1086 and c.1154.²⁸ Thus the two knights' fees of Hugh son of Richard can therefore be seen to have included the following estates:

²³ GDB, fols. 149, 150, 159v.

²⁴ *Regesta*, no. 167; Salter, 'Two Deeds', pp. 73-78.

²⁵ GDB, fol. 61v.

²⁶ *Ibid.*; *Historia*, pp. 157-58; *Regesta*, no. 167; Salter, 'Two Deeds', pp. 73-78.

²⁷ Salter, 'The Honour of Wallingford', no. 63; see also p. 320.

²⁸ GDB, fol. 149.

Table 9. The Estates of Hugh son of Richard son of Rainfrid

Manor	1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Fiscal	1086 Value (£)	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees
Appleton, Berkshire	Miles Crispin	Richard	5	3	Hugh son of Richard (of Appleton)	2 fees of the honour of Wallingford
Eaton, Berkshire	Miles Crispin	Richard	5	2.5		
Chearsley, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Richard	1.5	1.1		
Ickford, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Richard	4	4		
Upton, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Alric	1.5	1		
Draycot, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	Richard	2.25	1.5		
Alkerton, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	Richard	6	4		
Wroxton, Oxfordshire	-	-	0	0		
Estimated Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:			25.25	17.1		

3.1.4 The fitzAmaury family

Ralph fitzAmaury (*Radulfus filius Almarici*) owed the service of four knights in c.1154, while his brother, Robert fitzAmaury (*Robertus filius Amauri*) owed three. The 1300 list of knights shows the four fees that had been held by Ralph fitzAmaury in c.1154, to have consisted of land at Sulham, Burghfield and Carswell in Berkshire, Henton, Adwell and Britwell Salome in Oxfordshire, Bradwell in Buckinghamshire, and Ickenham in Middlesex.²⁹ He no doubt gained Burghfield (held of Henry de Ferrers in 1086), Carswell (held of the king), and Ickenham, held of Miles Crispin by an unnamed Englishman, in the years before his death. The bulk of this holding was held in

²⁹ Salter, 'The Honour of Wallingford,' no. 70.

Domesday Book by a man named William, who also held Chesterton in Oxfordshire and Betterton in Berkshire, which probably account for the three knight's fees of Robert fitzAmaury.³⁰ The estates of Amalric's sons are set out in the table:

Table 10. Sulham-fitzAmaury Estates

Manor	1086 Tenant-in- Chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Fiscal	1086 Value (£)	1166 Holder	Number of Fees
Britwell Salome, Oxon.	Miles Crispin	Amalric and William	6	3.5	Ralph fitzAmaury	4 fees of the honour of Wallingford
Sulham, Berks.	Miles Crispin	William	1	1.5		
Burghfield, Berks.	Henry de Ferrers	an alodiary	1.5	4		
Carswell, Berks.	Alweald the chamberlain	the queen's chamberlain	1	4		
Henton, Oxon.	Miles Crispin	William	8.25	5		
Adwell, Oxon.	Miles Crispin	William	3	6		
Bradwell, Bucks.	Miles Crispin	William	2.75	2		
Ickenham, Middx.	-	an Englishman	0	0		
Ralph fitzAmaury Total:			23.5	26		
Betterton, Berks.	Miles Crispin	William	10	3	Robert fitzAmaury	1 fee "
Chesterton, Oxon.	Miles Crispin	William	12	10		2 fees "
Robert fitzAmaury Total:			22	13		
Total Domesday Value of c.1154 holdings of Ralph and Robert fitzAmaury:			73.25	60		7 fees

³⁰ GDB, fols. 61v, 150, 159v; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' p. 325.

Both Amalric and William held land in Britwell Salome, the former holding three hides and the latter, one hide. Salter suggested that Amalric came to hold this land as a result of marriage of Amalric to a daughter of William.³¹

3.1.5 Walter Canute

Walter Canute held five fees in c.1154, which probably represent the Wiltshire lands held of Miles Crispin by Reginald in 1086 that did not pass to the Foliot family.³² Reginald is surnamed 'Canute' in the Geld Rolls preserved in the Exon Domesday, suggesting that Walter was a descendant of Reginald.³³ This identifies him with the Reginald Canute who held one hide at Chippenham in the same county.³⁴ Reginald Canute was one of Miles Crispin's wealthier tenants, holding thirty-six hides of land in Wiltshire, worth £28 in Domesday.³⁵ Not all of this land appears to have passed to Walter, as the manors of Chilton Foliat and Manton had come to be part of the estate of a branch of the Foliot by 1154.³⁶ Walter Canute's holding included the remaining manors Reginald held of Miles Crispin, namely Hazelbury, Draycot Foliot, Walcot, and Rodbourne (including Cockelborough). It was presumably supplemented by Ashley, where Domesday states that 'a knight of Miles Crispin claims one virgate of land,'³⁷ and an unidentifiable manor named 'Fouleswyke'.³⁸ These estates made up four fees in accounts of the honour's

³¹ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 325-6.

³² *RBE*, p. 309. See below, chapter 3.1.8.

³³ 'Wiltshire Geld Rolls,' XXXV Scipe Hundred; XL Blackgrove Hundred, printed in *VCH Wiltshire*, ii, pp. 210, 215.

³⁴ GDB, fol. 73.

³⁵ GDB, fol. 71.

³⁶ See below, chapter 3.1.8.

³⁷ GDB, fol. 71v.

³⁸ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' p. 313.

knight service from 1196 onwards.³⁹ The reason for this change from five fees to four is uncertain, though it may indicate that Walter held more land, which was lost by 1196.

Table 11. The Estates of the Canute Family

Manor	1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Fiscal	1086 Value (£)	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees
Hazelbury, Wiltshire	Miles Crispin	Reginald	5	6	Walter Canute	5 fees of the honour of Wallingford
Draycot Foliot, Wiltshire	Miles Crispin	Reginald	10	5		
Walcot, Wiltshire	Miles Crispin	Reginald	3.25	0		
Rodbourne, Wiltshire	Miles Crispin	Reginald	5	4		
Ashley, Wiltshire	Durand of Gloucester	a knight	0.25	0		
Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:			23.5	15		

3.1.6 The Pippard family

In c.1154, William Pippard held six fees of the honour, which can be identified from the six fees his descendant Ralph Pippard held in 1300 as being at Rotherfield Peppard and Great Haseley in Oxfordshire, Stewkley, Hollingdon, Wingrave, Wavendon, Burston, Hardwick and Pitchcott in Waddesdon, all in Buckinghamshire.⁴⁰ These are set out in the table:

³⁹ Ibid.; *Pipe Roll 8 Richard*, p. 160.

⁴⁰ *RBE*, p. 309.

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Table 12. The Estates of the Pippard Family

Manor	1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Fiscal	1086 Value (£)	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees
Rotherfield Peppard, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	-	5	10	William Pippard	1 fee
Great Haseley, Oxfordshire	Miles Crispin	-	16	15		
Stewkley, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Nigel	3.5	4		1 fee
Hollington, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Nigel	0.25	0.15		3 fees
Wingrave, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Nigel	5	5		
Wavendon, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Almaer	1	0.5		
Wingrave, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Almaer	2	2		
Wingrave, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Turstin the priest	0.5	0.5		
Burston, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	William	0.75	0.75		
Hardwick, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	William	1	1		
Littlecote	Miles Crispin	Robert	1	0.75		
Pitchcott (in Waddesdon), Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	-	0	0		1 fee
Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:			36	39.65		

3.1.7 The Basset family

The Basset family had a number of different branches. In 1154, the brothers Nicholas Basset and Thurstan Basset held 10 fees and $6\frac{2}{3}$ fees respectively of the honour of Wallingford.⁴¹ A number of these fees seem to have been held by their father, the great royal justice, Ralph Basset.⁴² Ralph had at least four sons, Richard, Nicholas, Thurstan and Ralph. Richard inherited his father's Norman lands and married the wealthy Matilda Ridel, who brought him the barony of Great Weldon, and established his descendants as tenants-in-chief of baronial status. Richard Basset followed his father into royal service and is seen acting as sheriff in a number of counties in 1130. This branch of the family had little connection with the honour of Wallingford.

Between 1123 and his death in 1127, Ralph Basset granted all the churches on his demesne manors to Ralph his son, a secular clerk who later entered Oseney Abbey as a monk.⁴³ The charter confirming this gift, issued by William, archbishop of Canterbury, datable to 1123x1127, names Ralph senior's demesne manors, including the Wallingford manors of Turkdean and Rissington in Gloucestershire, Marsworth in Buckinghamshire, Tiscott in Hertfordshire, and Oakley in Clapham in Bedfordshire.⁴⁴ These manors named were shared between his brothers Nicholas and Thurstan Basset by 1154.

⁴¹ *RBE*, pp. 308-9.

⁴² Green, *Government of England*, pp. 145, 231; Salter, 'The Honour of Wallingford', pp. 310-311, 319-320.

⁴³ *Oseney*, vi, pp. 129-130; no. 1046.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

The largest holding of the honour recorded in c.1154, is that of Nicholas Basset, who held ten fees. This estate did not survive beyond the late twelfth century, and so its full extent is difficult to reconstruct. The return for the inquest of 1212, which describes the descent of the honour, also addresses the fate of this holding. It states that the land of Nicholas Basset passed into the hands of King Henry II, as lord of the honour of Wallingford, and that two knights' fees consisting of the manor of Drayton (later Treton or Bruern) continued to be held by the monks of Bruern Abbey, while another half fee in Turkdean in Gloucestershire was granted by the king to a certain William son of Henry.⁴⁵ As this holding was taken into the king's hand as a result of the forfeiture of Nicholas's sons, the precise make-up of this estate is uncertain. Nicholas Basset founded the Cistercian abbey of Bruern at Drayton in 1147, granting to his new foundation the manor of Drayton, which thereafter became known as Bruern. In 1300, the abbot of Bruern held three fees of the honour; two in Oxfordshire, which must be the manor of Drayton, and one in Gloucestershire.⁴⁶ It may be assumed that this represents a portion of Nicholas Basset's ten fees. In 1167, Turkdean, Thenford, and part of Drayton were in the king's hands, while Rissington must have been given away immediately as it was not farmed by the sheriff.⁴⁷ These manors which lay in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Northamptonshire are situated outside the most concentrated areas of Wallingford property, and some may have become detached from the honour by the thirteenth century, making identification of all ten fees difficult. Seven of the ten fees are identifiable as

⁴⁵ *Book of Fees*, p. 117.

⁴⁶ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 298, nos. 21, 33; pp. 310-11.

⁴⁷ *Pipe Roll 16 Henry II*, p. 34; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 310.

Rissington in Gloucestershire (3 fees), Turkdean in Gloucestershire ($\frac{1}{2}$ fee), Drayton (2 fees), Clifton in Worcestershire (1 fee), and Thenford in Northamptonshire ($\frac{1}{2}$ fee).⁴⁸

Ralph Basset's other son, Thurstan, the brother of Richard, Nicholas, and Ralph the clerk, is recorded as having held $6\frac{2}{3}$ fees in c.1154.⁴⁹ This estate was still in existence in 1300, though it had been divided equally among the six daughters of another Thurstan Basset in 1222. These $6\frac{2}{3}$ fees lay in Letcombe Basset in Berkshire, Marsworth and Hawridge in Buckinghamshire, Tiscott in Hertfordshire and Oakley and Clapham in Bedfordshire.⁵⁰ Hawridge does not appear in Domesday Book, and was probably included in the twenty hides at Marsworth.

Taking the known estates of Nicholas and Thurstan Basset together, it is possible to identify the holding of Ralph Basset in the honour, which is shown in the table:

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 310-11; nos. 21, 31-33.

⁴⁹ *RBE*, p. 309.

⁵⁰ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' nos. 55-59; p. 319.

Table 13. The Honour of Wallingford Estates of Ralph Basset and his sons (with known demesne manors of Ralph Basset c. 1123-1127 underlined)

Manor	1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 Tenant	1086 Fiscal	1086 Value (£)	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees
Drayton (later Bruern), Oxfordshire	Robert d'Oilly	-	10	7	Nicholas Basset	10 fees
<u>Little Rissington, Gloucestershire</u>	Robert d'Oilly	-	10	8		
<u>Upper Turkdean, Gloucestershire</u>	Robert d'Oilly	-	5.6	5		
Thenford, Northamptonshire	Robert d'Oilly	Roger	1	1.5		
Clifton upon Teme, Worcestershire	Osbern fitz Richard	Robert d'Oilly	3	2		
Letcombe Bassett, Berkshire	Robert d'Oilly	-	10	16	Thurstan Basset	6 and 2/3 fees
<u>Marsworth, Buckinghamshire</u>	Robert d'Oilly	Ralph Basset	20	20		
<u>Tiscott, Hertfordshire</u>	Robert d'Oilly	Ralph Basset	1.5	0		
Clapham, Bedfordshire	Miles Crispin	-	5	24		
<u>Oakley, Bedfordshire</u>	Countess Judith	Miles Crispin	1	0.5		
Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:			67.1	84		

Gilbert Basset held seven fees of the honour in 1154, which by 1300 were held by Henry de Lacy, and consisted of Bicester, Wrethwyk, and Stratton Audley in Oxfordshire; Colham and Uxbridge in Middlesex; Pitstone in Buckinghamshire;

Ardington in Berkshire; and Compton Basset in Wiltshire.⁵¹ This collection of estates makes it certain that Gilbert Basset was enfeoffed relatively late. In Domesday Book, these lands were held by four different tenants-in-chief, as is shown in the table.⁵²

Table 14. Estates of Gilbert Basset

Manor	1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 Subtenant	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees	1086 Value (£)
Bicester (inc. Wrechwick), Oxfordshire	Robert d'Oilly	-	Gilbert Basset	7 fees	16
Stratton Audley, Oxfordshire	Robert d'Oilly	Alweard			3
Pitstone, Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Swærtung			0.5
Pitstone Buckinghamshire	Miles Crispin	Roger			1.5
Colham Green (inc. Uxbridge), Middlesex	Earl Roger of Montgomery	-			8
Hillingdon, Middlesex	Earl Roger of Montgomery	-			3
Compton Bassett, Wiltshire	Thorkill	-			5
Total Domesday Value of 1166 estate (£):					37

The remaining Bassets were Osmund and Fulk. The Fulk Basset who held one knight's fee in c.1154, is probably the same Fulk Basset who appears witnessing the charter of Brian and Matilda of Wallingford, granting Ogbourne to the abbey of Bec

⁵¹ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 324.

⁵² GDB, fols. 158, 150, 129, 74.

between 1107 and 1133.⁵³ He was most probably a relative of Ralph Basset, though it is not possible to trace who he was, or where his fee was held. The details concerning the one and a quarter knight's fee held by Osmund Basset are much clearer. An entry in the charter roll of 1207/8 recording the confirmation by King John to Osmund's grandson William Basset, of a gift of Brian fitz Count to Osmund of a knight's fee at Oakley and a quarter of a knight's fee at Ipsden.⁵⁴ His claim to Oakley presumably arose out of his marriage to Basilia, the widow of Luvel de Brai, who held the manor in the reign of Henry I. Basilia appears to have married three times, and had sons from all three marriages, as a charter of her son John Basset in the cartulary of Missenden Abbey, confirming a gift of Osmund and Basilia, his father and mother, is confirmed by her elder sons, Fulk Luvel and Geoffrey de Plessis.⁵⁵

3.1.8 The Foliot family

The only Foliot named in the c.1154 list is Walter Foliot who held two fees of the honour, which may be identified from later evidence as having been Cuxham and Isenhampstead near Chesham.⁵⁶ His descendant, another Walter Foliot held two fees in 1212 and was sheriff in 1225.⁵⁷ His daughter and heir married Stephen de Chesnduit who held two fees at Cuxham and Isenhamsted in 1236.⁵⁸

⁵³ *Select Documents*, no. 37.

⁵⁴ *Rot. Chart.*, p. 175; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 309.

⁵⁵ *Missenden*, no. 658; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' p. 309.

⁵⁶ Salter, 'The Honour of Wallingford', p. 318.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*; *Book of Fees*, p. 119.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 463; for Chenduits see chapters 5 and 6.

Another branch of the Foliot family appears to have held two fees of the honour in Chilton Foliot, Ogbourne, Manton in Wiltshire.⁵⁹ This holding is most likely represented in the c.1154 list by the two fees of either the bishop of Salisbury or John the Marshal, who probably had the custody of the holder of them.⁶⁰ In 1167, Chilton of Robert Foliot was amerced for forest pleas. At some time before his death in 1166, Robert de Chesney, bishop of Lincoln, confirmed a grant of Ralph Foliot of the church of Fritwell, Oxfordshire, to the priory of St Frideswide.⁶¹ The Oxfordshire manors of Fritwell and Noke descended with these two Wallingford fees.⁶² The holdings of this branch of the family are set out in the table:

Table 15. The Estates of the Foliot Family of Chilton Foliot

Manor	1086 Tenant	c.1154 Holder	Number of Fees	1086 Value (£)
Chilton Foliot	Reginald Canute	Bishop of Salisbury or John Marshal	2	10
Ogbourne	part of demesne of Miles Crispin			0
Manton	Reginald Canute			3
Total Domesday Value of c.1154 estate:				13

⁵⁹ *RBE*, p. 309; 'The Honour of Wallingford,' p. 298, no. 29.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

⁶¹ *St Frideswide*, i, p. 221; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 313.

⁶² *Ibid.*

3.2 THE IDENTITY OF THE HONOUR

Having examined the descent of some of the fees, the remainder of this chapter examines the identity of the honour before c. 1154 and the extent to which tenants were part of an honorial community.

3.2.1 Structure and distribution of fees

A total of forty-four tenants owed the service of nearly 100 knights in 1154. The distribution of tenants' holdings by knights' fees is summarised in the table below:

Table 16. Distribution of knights' fees on the honour of Wallingford c. 1154

Size of Holding	Total Number of knights' fees	% of total fees	Number of tenants	% of tenants
4-10 knights' fees	38	38%	6	14%
3-4 knights' fees	24.33	24%	8	18%
2-3 knights' fees	21.5	22%	11	25%
1-2 knights' fees	13	13%	13	30%
Less than 1 knight's fee	2.75	3%	6	14%
	99.58	100%	44	100%

The largest concentration of fees was in the group of six tenants who held more than four knights' fees, and who together held thirty-eight percent of the honour's fees. Of these, the three with the largest numbers of knights' fees were members of the Basset family, while one, William Pippard was probably the son of a former steward of the honour. Although this top group held the largest number of fees, it remains significant that those holding more than one knight's fee but less than four, represent seventy-two

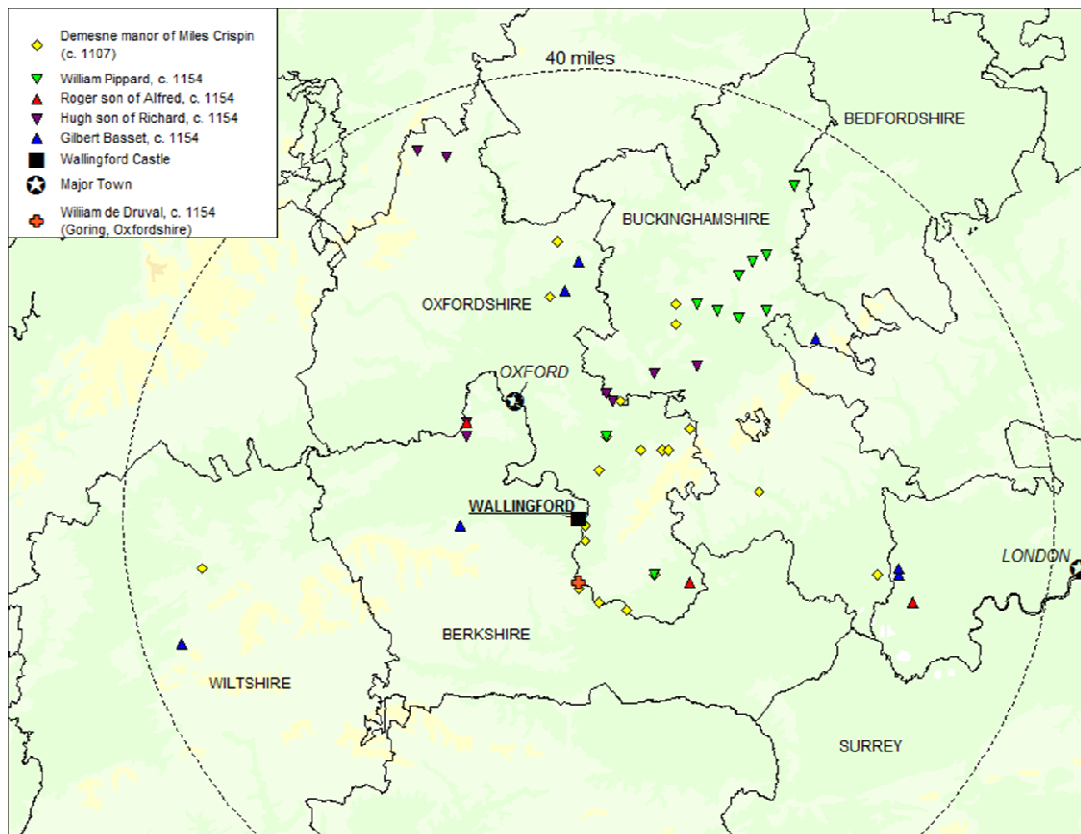
per cent of the tenants and held sixty percent of the fees. It is clear that in terms of knights' fees, the concentration of wealth was with those who held less extensive estates. The largest single group of tenants, making up thirty per cent of all forty-four tenants, held a single knights' fee, yet these tenants only held thirteen per cent of the total number of knights' fees. Both the Basset and Pippard families are represented in this group as well, with Fulk and Osmund Basset holding one fee each, and Robert Pippard holding one fee.

Lack of detailed evidence makes it difficult to assess the size of estates that these tenants held. Roger son of Alfred and those of Peter de la Mare, who both owed the service of three knights in 1154, seem to have held lands that were assessed at a total of 26 and 27½ hides respectively in 1086.⁶³ These are similar sized estates and both owed the same number of knights' fees. Hugh son of Richard son of Rainfrid held lands assessed at just over 25 hides but owed only two knights. This is not much smaller than the holdings that owed service of three knights, yet it was not exceptional. William de Druval owed the service of two knights in 1154 for the manor of Goring which in Domesday was assessed at 20 hides. The terms by which military service was set are unclear, and without any records of enfeoffment, it is impossible to explain the relationship between amounts of land and the numbers of knights' owed, except to say that where we can be confident of identifying estates as in the two cases just mentioned, there is a general correlation, if not a precise one, between Domesday hidage and *servitium debitum*.

⁶³ See sections .3.1.1 and 3.1.2 above.

An important aspect of English landholding at the level of tenant-in-chief was the way in which estates were dispersed among those of others.⁶⁴ This is evident among the tenants of the honour of Wallingford (see map below). The entire holding of William de Druval, who owed two knights in 1154, consisted of 20 hides in the vill of Goring on the Thames, six miles south of Wallingford. This, however, was unusual, with most tenant holdings, of this size and smaller being made up of scattered estates, often in several shires. The two knights' fees of Hugh son of Richard son of Rainfrid consisted of eight manors of varying sizes located in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire, most of which, as it has been shown had been held together by his father in 1086.

Figure 6. Map showing the location of the demesne manors of Miles Crispin c. 1107 and the holdings of leading tenants of the honour of Wallingford



⁶⁴ Holt, *Northerners*, pp. 41-2.

The estates of other tenants were similarly spread out and interspersed with other fees of the honour of Wallingford and those of other honours. This was true of the large holdings as well as the small. Even the 1¼ knights' fee of Osmund Basset was made up of two manors, one at Oakley in Buckinghamshire, the other at Ipsden in Oxfordshire. Very few holdings therefore appear to have been confined to one single shire and most consisted of holdings at some distance apart.

3.2.2 The origins of tenants and the process of colonisation

The case of the honour of Wallingford helps to shed some light on the continuing process of colonisation below the level of tenants-in-chief. Enfeoffment of tenants on the honour was far from complete in 1086 and it continued into the reign of King Stephen. Although it is difficult to be certain of the manors that were held by tenants in this period and the times they were enfeoffed, in at least some cases enfeoffment seems to have occurred gradually. Domesday records that a large proportion of the lands of Miles Crispin were held by Englishmen in 1086, many of whom could have held before 1066. By 1154, many of these were in the possession of tenants of French descent. Almaer, described in Domesday as a man of the thegn Beorhtric, still held three hides of Miles Crispin in 1086; but by 1154, this land had probably become part of the holding of William Pippard, perhaps the son of the Gilbert Pippard described as Miles Crispin's *dapifer*, who in 1107 placed Miles's gift of a house at Colnbrook on the altar at Abingdon, and who also witnessed a charter of Brian fitzCount at Iver.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ GDB, fol. 150; *Historia*, ii, pp. 141-2; Kennet, *Parochial Antiquities*, p. 137; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' p. 308. For Brian's charter issued at Iver, see below, p. 120.

In another case, land at Cowley and Garsington in Oxfordshire assessed at just over two-and-a-half hides was held by a man named Toli in 1086 as it had been *TRE*.⁶⁶ Yet they formed part of the two knights' fees of the Chausey family in 1300, whose ancestor, Geoffrey de Chausey was enfeoffed by 1154.⁶⁷ In this case, given the paucity of the evidence, it is not possible to tell whether this estate had changed hands, what the circumstances of this were, or whether there was in fact any family connection between Toli and Richard de Chausey who held two knights' fees in 1154.⁶⁸ The only tenancy in 1154 that was almost certainly held by the descendant of a pre-Conquest landholder was Roger son of Alfred, who held a similar holding to that of his ancestor Alfred, nephew of Wigod.⁶⁹ In this case, Alfred's kinship with the family of Wigod of Wallingford and consequently to Matilda of Wallingford was probably an important factor in his survival.

A number of other tenants came from families with connections to Miles Crispin or Robert d'Oilly in Normandy. Geoffrey de la Mare and Hugh son of Richard both had links to the Crispin family in Normandy before the Conquest. Hugh was probably the son of Richard son of Rainfrid, a tenant of Miles in six vills in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire in 1086, who held half of the church and tithe of Bourneville, the other half being held by William Crispin the younger, both of them granting it to Bec before 1077.⁷⁰ Four out of seven of the manors that made up Peter de la Mare's three fees in 1154 had been held in 1086 by Geoffrey,⁷¹ who may have been identical with the Geoffrey de Lamara who held land at Beuville in modern Saint-Thurien, cant.

⁶⁶ GDB, fol. 159v.

⁶⁷ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' no. 65.

⁶⁸ *RBE*, p. 309.

⁶⁹ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford,' p. 323; see section 3.1.1.

⁷⁰ *Regesta*, pp. 551-552; Porée, *Histoire*, i, pp. 331, 646. See section 3.1.3.

⁷¹ GDB, fols. 159v, 150, 169v. See section 3.1.2.

Quillebeuf-sur-Seine, thirty miles from the Crispin family's castle at Tillières, and three miles from where Richard son of Rainfrid held land at Bourneville.⁷² Lack of evidence makes it difficult to generalise, however. Many of the tenants holding of the honour in 1154 had Norman surnames, though how far they or their ancestors were linked to the lords of the honour before the Conquest is uncertain.

Very little information survives of the reasons for which tenants were enfeoffed. Specific service to the lord of Wallingford might be expected, and can be traced in a few cases. The Pippard holding was in evidence in 1086; a man named Nigel held eight hides and a virgate of land in Stewkley, Wingrave, and Hollingdon, all in Buckinghamshire, which had the combined value of £9 3s in 1086.⁷³ This estate was greatly enlarged in subsequent years to form the six knights' fees he is known to have held in c.1154.⁷⁴ This may have been a result of Gilbert Pippard's role as Miles Crispin's steward. Riulf de Saisson was constable of Wallingford castle during the period of civil war in Stephen's reign and was granted land, probably by Henry of Anjou, from the honour's demesne at Aston Rowant and Iver before 1154.⁷⁵

The Boterel family, represented in c.1154 by Geoffrey Boterel who held three fees of the honour, are one family that clearly seem to have owed their land holding to service to the lord of Wallingford. Three members of this family appear as witnesses to charters of Brian and Matilda. Peter Boterel attested both the 1107x1133 charter of Brian and Matilda granting Ogbourne to Bec, and the 1133x1147 charter of Matilda regranting

⁷² *Recueil*, ed. Faroux, no. 218, p. 414.

⁷³ GDB, fol. 150.

⁷⁴ See section 3.1.6.

⁷⁵ *Book of Fees*, p. 116.

it under her own seal.⁷⁶ The earlier charter was witnessed by a Geoffrey Boterel and a Peter Boterel, while the latter by Peter Boterel and William Boterel. They were Bretons who were probably kinsmen of Brian fitzCount, and who were associated with the Angevin cause in the civil war of Stephen's reign. The *Gesta Stephani* mentions a 'certain Count Boterel of Brittany' (*Boterellus quidam comes Brittanice*) among the army that assembled with the Empress at Winchester in 1141.⁷⁷ Potter identifies him as a relation of Geoffrey Boterel, the brother of Alan of Brittany. The Geoffrey who attests the charter of Brian and Matilda is probably this man. Geoffrey's son William Boterel was constable of Wallingford Castle. He was addressed as such in the charter of the Empress and her son of 1150 that confirmed Brian's foundation of a college of canons at the chapel of St Nicholas,⁷⁸ while the Abingdon Chronicle contains an account of the abbey's dealings with William while he was constable during this period.⁷⁹ It states that the abbot paid William to protect his abbey and its possessions from his troops, but that he plundered the abbey's village of Culham, oblivious to his promise. It goes on to describe how the abbot then placed him under a bond of anathema, after which he was mortally wounded in battle and was succeeded by his brother Peter, who gave the abbey a mill at Benson rendering 5s, as compensation for his brother's actions. By the start of Henry II's reign, therefore, the Boterels had provided great service to the lords of Wallingford, first their kinsman Brian, and then Henry of Anjou.

In several cases, holdings may have been the product of royal intervention. In 1154, the son of the great royal servant Geoffrey de Clinton held two fees of the honour,

⁷⁶ *Select Documents*, nos. 37, 47.

⁷⁷ *Gesta Stephani*, p. 85.

⁷⁸ *RRAN*, iii, no. 88.

⁷⁹ *Historia*, pp. 314-317.

while a quarter of the knights' service owed, was from members of the Basset family, also important in royal government from the beginning of the twelfth century.⁸⁰ Ralph Basset was a prominent royal servant in the reign of Henry I, identified by Orderic Vitalis as one of the 'new men' of base stock whom the king had 'raised from the dust.'⁸¹ Although he was already established as a tenant of Robert d'Oilly in 1086, his holding had greatly increased in size by the 1120s.⁸² Green has noted that Henry I's ministers gained a large number of subtenancies, indicating that this was one important method by which the king rewarded his 'new men'.⁸³ These additional lands granted by Brian fitzCount to his tenant may represent an attempt by Brian to gain favour with, and influence, an important royal servant, or alternatively they may have been granted by Brian as a result of pressure from the king. Brian's tenure of the honour was itself derived from the gift by the king of the marriage of Miles Crispin's widow, Matilda. Brian too was one of Henry I's 'new men' albeit one with more illustrious descent.

So, Ralph Basset's holding of the honour was probably connected with his being a royal servant. It is unknown whether it was his influence that secured holdings not just for his sons but for many other of his kinsmen. In 1154 there were five tenants with the surname Basset. Nicholas and Thurstan Basset were the sons of Ralph Basset whose family had links with the d'Oilly family in Normandy and who was one of three Bassets holding of Robert d'Oilly in Domesday. The Gilbert Basset of 1154 was probably his brother or a nephew, while Fulk and Osmund Basset were also part of the extended family but how is unclear. Whether this is the result of Ralph using his influence to

⁸⁰ Green, *Government*, pp. 231-2.

⁸¹ *Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, iv, pp. 16-17; Green, *Government*, pp. 139, 145-6.

⁸² See section 3.1.7.

⁸³ Green, *Government*, pp.182-3.

provide for his extended kin, and whether this was initiated by Ralph or by the lords of Wallingford or by someone else is not known, but it appears that another reason for knights holding lands was through kinship to existing tenants. In addition to the Bassets, Peter and Hugh de la Mare owed knights' service in 1154, as did Ralph and Robert fitzAmaury, and two members of the Pippard family (though the precise relationship between these is unknown). It seems that kinship with an existing tenant could result in an individual gaining a tenancy himself.

There was thus great variety in the origins of the tenant families holding in the mid twelfth century, reflecting the different stages of lordship of the honour from Wigod, through to Robert, then Miles and finally Brian fitzCount. Each lord appears to have enfeoffed tenants on the honour with whom he had connections of service or kinship while individuals and descendants of earlier landholders in many cases continued to hold their lands under a new lord. This being so, to what extent did the tenants of the honour form a community?

3.2.3 An honorial community?

The tenants of the honour were a disparate group in terms of wealth and origins. Yet there is evidence of ties between lords and their tenants and between tenants in the period discussed in the form of charters of lords of Wallingford that were addressed to or witnessed by tenants, and charters of tenants that were witnessed by fellow members of the honorial community.

One of the few charters of a lord of Wallingford, that of Brian fitzCount granting the church of Hillingdon in Middlesex to Evesham Abbey, provides evidence of an honorial gathering. It is reproduced as follows:

Brienus filius comitis R. Londonie episcopo et Hugoni de Bocheland, et hominibus de Colham de Midlesex salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse ecclesie S. Marie de Evesham, ecclesiam de Hildendon [*Hillingdon, Middlesex*] et tertiam partem decime de Dominico meo, cum una hida terre, et unam mansionem cum orto qui ibi pertinet apud Oxebruge, et volo et precipio quod pacifice et honorifice habeant ea conventionem quam ego et uxor mea simus fratres, et participes orationum et beneficiorum illius ecclesie in sempiternum. Hoc fuit in nativitate Domini apud Eure [*Iver, Buckinghamshire*] in redditu de curia London.

Teste ipsa Domina Matilda, et Radulfo Basset, et Gilberto Basset, et Gilberto Pipart, et Rogero Caisneto, et Warino capellano, et Hugone filio Milonis, et Rogero filio Alvredi, et Radulfo Foliot.⁸⁴

[Brian fitzCount to R. bishop of London and Hugh de Bocland, and to the men of Colham of Middlesex, greeting. Know that I have given and granted to the church of Saint Mary of Evesham, the church of Hillingdon [Middlesex] and a third part of the tithes of my demesne, with one hide of land with a house having been built which pertains to it there at Uxbridge, and I will and order that peacefully and honourably they may have the agreement that I and my wife are to be brothers, and sharing the prayer and kindness of that church forever. This was at Christmas at Iver [Buckinghamshire] on return from the court at London.

Witnessed in person by Lady Matilda, and Ralph Basset, and Gilbert Basset, and Gilbert Pippard, and Roger Chesney, and Warin the chaplain, and Hugh son of Miles, and Roger son of Alfred, and Ralph Foliot.]

Kennet dates this to 1143, though this cannot be verified. Whatever its date, however, it is a valuable document. The witness list of this charter represents a fascinating insight into Brian's social world and the nature of his following. It records eight individuals who spent Christmas with Brian at his manor of Iver, when he was returning from London. The people Brian witnessed alongside in royal charters were other leading magnates, whereas this charter seems to show Brian's own circle. The list

⁸⁴ Printed in Kennet, *Parochial Antiquities*, pp. 136-7 citing R. Dods. MS. Vol. 105. f. 16.

begins with Matilda his wife, perhaps included because the tithes of Hillingdon he was granting were of her honour of Wallingford. It also highlights the intimacy of the gathering, and along with the place and date of the charter, further suggests that this was Brian's *familia*. These were the people he travelled with and spent one of the major feast days of the year with. Apart from Matilda and the chaplain, all the rest are known to have been his tenants.

The charter of c.1152 by which Duke Henry and the Empress jointly confirmed the foundation of a house of Austin canons at Wallingford castle for the souls of Brian and Matilda also suggests an honorial community.⁸⁵ The charter opens with the following:

M. Imperatrix Henrici Regis filia et Henricus Dux Normandie Wyllemo Boterello conestabulo Warengfordie et Ansfrido filio Rualdi dapifero et omnibus baronibus suis et ceteris militibus et burgensibus clericis et laicis de Warengfordia et omnibus fidelibus suis salutem.

William Boterel was a tenant of the honour at the start of Henry II's reign, while the name of Ansfrid fitzRuald suggests that he too may have held Aston Rowant in Oxfordshire of the honour. The charter was witnessed by thirteen individuals, some of them perhaps part of the households of the Empress or Duke Henry such as William the chancellor and Hugh the physician, while a number, including Hugh de Druval, Warin fitzGerold, and someone with the surname Malet but whose first name is illegible, were all tenants of the honour.

In some cases, tenants and members of the seigneurial household witnessed the grants of fellow tenants. The earliest example is a record of a grant by Roger son of

⁸⁵ *RRAN*, iii, no. 88.

Alfred of the church and tithe of Eaton in Berkshire to Abingdon Abbey.⁸⁶ This grant is stated to have been witnessed by Warin, the chaplain of Miles, who was probably the chaplain of Roger's lord and kinsman, Miles Crispin. The record of another grant to Abingdon Abbey by Hugh son of Richard son of Rainfrid of two hides of land at Wroxton in Oxfordshire by the consent of Brian fitzCount, was witnessed by Ruellant the steward, Gilbert Pippard, Ralph Foliot, Hugh son of Miles and many others.⁸⁷ Ruellant the steward cannot be identified. He could have been connected to Abingdon, but he is more likely to have been the steward of the honour of Wallingford, given the other names in the list, all of which are those of Wallingford tenants. Richard seems to have made his grant in the presence of a number of fellow tenants of the honour of Wallingford.

William de Druval also made a grant at an honorial gathering. A charter he issued granting a hide of land at Goring, which he held of the honour, to Eynsham some time before 1154 was attested by Riulf de Saisson, William Boterel, Walter Foliot, Thomas Basset and Robert Basset.⁸⁸ Again, these names give the charter a strong honorial character. Riulf de Saisson was the constable of Wallingford castle during the civil war period, while the others were either known tenants or the kinsmen of tenants of the honour. In each of these cases there seems to have been a strong connection between members of the honorial community.

Historians have attached great significance to patterns of religious patronage and what this reveals about the nature of lordship.⁸⁹ In this case there was no single religious foundation at the centre of the honour, as there had been for the Warenne honour at

⁸⁶ *Historia*, pp. 209-10.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-8.

⁸⁸ *Eynsham*, no. 127.

⁸⁹ Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, pp. 172-84; Mortimer, 'Land and Service', pp. 177-198.

Lewes, or the Clare honour at Stoke-by-Clare. The attempted development of the chapel of St Nicholas perhaps shows that lords of Wallingford attempted to address this. Miles appears to have founded the prebends of Wallingford, while Brian seems to have begun the process of founding a house of canons connected with the chapel, which was subsequently confirmed the Empress and Duke Henry, though which never came to pass.⁹⁰

Some tenants came from families that had made gifts to the abbey of Bec in Normandy.⁹¹ Another Benedictine house, the pre-Conquest abbey of Abingdon was also the recipient of grants from a number of tenants. Old English monasteries like Abingdon transcended post-Conquest tenurial structures attracting patronage from local subtenants of different lords, as Cownie has argued.⁹² Abingdon had royal protection as with other pre-Conquest foundations, but was especially close to the king, particularly after the arrival of Henry I's physician, Faritius, as abbot.⁹³ Miles Crispin and Brian fitzCount, who both had close connections to the royal court, also had ties to Abingdon. Richard son of Rainfrid together with his wife, and Ralph Basset, are known to have been buried there, while Gilbert Basset gave his son to be a monk there.⁹⁴ A number of tenants of the honour made grants to the abbey, including Richard son of Rainfrid and his son; Gilbert Basset; Roger, the son of Alfred the nephew of Wigod; and William of Sulham.⁹⁵ Connections to Abingdon may have been the result of its connections with the king and

⁹⁰ BL: Cotton Vitellius E XV, fol. 22, printed in *Oseney*, iv, no. 385; Roffe, 'Wallingford in Domesday', p. 36. See discussion of the chapel in the late thirteenth century in chapter 6.

⁹¹ William de Druval, Richard son of Rainfrid, and Hugh son of Miles.

⁹² Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 182.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 182.

⁹⁴ *Historia*, pp. 157-8, 211-12, 245-6; Cownie, *Religious Patronage*, pp. 50, 53.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*; *Historia*, ii, pp. 210-11; 205-6.

with Faritius, as well as geography, though the fact that some tenants made gifts to the same foundation as their lord is interesting.

Despite important associations of some tenants with Abingdon and Bec, religious patronage is one area where considerable independence from lordship is evident. Eynsham, another pre-Conquest foundation in the area, received gifts from Ralph Basset, Gilbert Basset, and William de Druval, the successor of Thomas de Druval who made gifts to Bec.⁹⁶ Eynsham attracted gifts from those who also gave to Abingdon and to Bec, yet in this case, there was no obvious connection between Eynsham and the lords of Wallingford. In this sense, locality can be seen to have been important for tenants of the honour. That southern Oxfordshire had a particular concentration of fees of the honour may have made ties of locality and those of lordship mutually supportive, which probably had the effect of strengthening these local ties.⁹⁷

It has been recognised that ties of lordship were weakened when individual tenants held of more than one lord.⁹⁸ Multiple ties of lordship were common as a result of the tenorial situation in England after the Conquest, and have been recognised as one of the main hindrances to the strength of lordship that existed in the period. For men who were politically prominent such as Ralph and Gilbert Basset, and Geoffrey de Clinton, their vast holdings beyond the honour of Wallingford are more prominent in sources of the period. Multiple lordship alone, however seems not to have meant weakening links between them and the honour of Wallingford. Ralph and Gilbert Basset have been shown to have been involved in the affairs of the honour as well as being tenants-in-chief and

⁹⁶ *Eynsham*, nos. 36, 127; *Select Documents*, no. 24.

⁹⁷ Holt found that by the thirteenth century, 'complex bonds of association and common interest ... were created by families living together for generations in the same environment and atmosphere.' Holt, *Northerners*, p. 36.

⁹⁸ Mortimer, 'Land and Service', pp. 195-6.

royal officials. The de la Mare family held the manor of Lavington in Wiltshire in chief in 1166,⁹⁹ but also seem to have maintained close links with the lords of Wallingford.

The history of the honour of Wallingford in the century after 1066 thus demonstrates the way in which one great estate was formed and how it developed under Norman rule. There appears to have been continuity in the female line, though it is not clear how accurate our late evidence for this is. Conversely, the lords of Wallingford were not all part of the same lineage but rather seem to have owed their position to royal patronage. Tenants were evidently enfeoffed by each of the lords at different times, leading to the creation of a disparate body of tenants rather than families with close connections to their lords' family that extended back to before 1066 and which helped to sustain some honorial communities of the twelfth century.¹⁰⁰ There is evidence, nevertheless, that the tenants did continue to form a community and that however they acquired their lands, they still maintained links with each other and their honorial lord. In many instances, tenant families displayed more continuity of tenure than did the lords of Wallingford. The state of the evidence means that very few conclusions can be advanced for this period. As evidence becomes more abundant for the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries, more becomes clear about the influences on the development of honorial society.

⁹⁹ *RBE*, i, p. 246.

¹⁰⁰ Golob, 'Ferrers Earls of Derby'.

4 GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION, 1154–1300

The record evidence of the late twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries clearly demonstrates that the honour of Wallingford existed as an entity throughout this period. This chapter analyses the administration of the honour while the effects these institutional structures had on the people connected with the honour will be explored in chapter 6, which considers the nature of lordship and the existence of an honorial community.

The administration of the honour of Wallingford is best approached from two directions: firstly in terms of its external relationship with the king and the developing structures of royal government; and secondly in terms of the honour's internal administration. It is important to recognise that jurisdiction within the honour concerned different levels of society in different ways. Historians have long distinguished between the 'franchisal' jurisdiction of lords, often characterised as public delegated royal authority over all free men, and 'baronial' or 'seigneurial' jurisdiction arising out of the tenurial relationship.

4.1 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HONOUR AND ROYAL GOVERNMENT

The honour of Wallingford provides an interesting perspective on the political and social organisation of England in this period. Aided by the vast and systematic collection of surviving records of royal government, more is known about the operation of the remarkably powerful and centralised English monarchy than any of its neighbouring polities. Much of this continuing work, however, has emphasised aspects of uniformity and bureaucratic systems, tending to underplay exceptional cases. Our picture of

government in this period is of strong central institutions and local officials closely accountable to those central organs all tied together in a sophisticated bureaucratic system. This is a convincing representation that explains much about the social and political development of England across the period. It does not account, however, for exceptions in particular cases where areas of jurisdiction lay outside this system.

England's great 'liberties' as both modern historians and contemporaries have called them have not gone unnoticed. Pollock and Maitland discussed *Bracton's* identification of certain 'sacred' matters that belonged to the crown, and identified the areas where people other than the king held jurisdiction in these royal areas as franchises.¹ W.O. Ault compared the different kinds of 'private jurisdiction' operating in England across a number of important liberties, including the honours of Wallingford and St Valery.² Several years later, Helen Cam published an important study of local government, in which she addressed the role of liberties within the system of royal administration she described.³ In the 1960s Cam and Michael Clanchy sought to explain the origins and development of these liberties, identifying them as a political and legal settlement that arose out of the encroachment of royal power and the defence of existing powers by barons.⁴ By the thirteenth century, they argued, franchises had become '[integrated] into the general pattern of royal government'.⁵ Cam has maintained that liberties became a part of the system of royal government, and that they were cogs in the wider machine rather than a threat to royal power, and that the lords of liberties were the

¹ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, pp. 571-584; Cam, *Law-Finders*, p. 40.

² Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*.

³ Cam, *The Hundred*, pp. 202-233.

⁴ Clanchy, 'Return of Writs', pp. 59-82; Cam, *Law-Finders*, pp. 22-43.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 36-7.

king's ministers, responsible to him and subject to forfeiture if they failed to keep the king's peace.⁶

In the last decade, historians have begun to challenge this view of the position of liberties with a series of studies that have highlighted the extensive autonomy of certain areas of great jurisdictional privilege.⁷ Indeed this is partly the result of scholars approaching the subject of power and society from new perspectives. In an important article of 2003, R.R. Davies suggested that as a result both of the nature of the surviving records and the way in which 'constitutional history' was conceived by its pioneers, historians have tended to take an overly teleological and state-centred interpretation of the English polity.⁸ He argued that there has been an over-emphasis on royal power and insufficient attention paid to the many alternative nodes of power in medieval society. Rather than seeing power as something indivisible and resting with the king, who could compete with others and delegate his sovereignty through a series of official structures, historians are beginning to recognise that power depended more on a range of mutually beneficial relationships between individuals and groups that embraced a range of overlapping jurisdictions. In this context the kind of jurisdictional privileges seen within English liberties of this period would seem to be of great significance if we are to understand accurately the texture of political society.

David Crouch's recent study of the English aristocracy takes issue with the focus of recent historiography in this area on the nature of the state, which he argues, 'asserts a

⁶ Cam, *Liberties and Communities*, pp. 183-204, esp. p. 204.

⁷ Carpenter, 'King, Magnates and Society', pp. 39-70; Holford, 'Feet of Fines for the Palatinate of Durham, 1228-1457', pp. 818-843, at p. 819; Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham; Thornton, Cheshire and the Tudor State, 1480-1560*.

⁸ Davies, 'The Medieval State', pp. 280-300, esp. pp. 289-290; Stringer, 'States, Liberties and Communities', pp. 5-36, at pp. 8-9.

conflictual, top-down dynamic in interpreting magnate power which runs clean counter to the evidence'.⁹ He prefers to view barons' concern to exercise 'high justice' or justice 'of life and limbs' as an element in the definition of noble status 'in much the same way as possession of the *ban* is held by French historians to define noble status in France.'¹⁰ In England such rights were circumscribed by the reach of royal government, but, he contends, English nobles continued to assert these rights vigorously, and kings understood their outlook. It is argued here that status and franchisal jurisdiction were indeed probably linked. The relationship between the honour and royal government encompassed more, however, than rights of 'high justice' which were limited within it.

The liberty of the honour of Wallingford is an especially relevant jurisdiction to examine in light of these historiographical debates. It was the only liberty mentioned by name in the assize of Clarendon and in Magna Carta, though for different reasons. It was also an honour that consisted of many manors scattered over several counties in the heartland of the English monarchy. The recent resurgence of interest in peculiar jurisdictions has been driven by historians of the north of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.¹¹ In these areas, different cultural and social patterns, political traditions and logistical factors all made the theoretical claims of English royal lawyers more difficult to translate into actual practice on the ground.¹² In the upper Thames valley, however, where royal castles, hunting lodges, sheriffs and royal justices were in abundance, it is perhaps less clear as to why a jurisdictional immunity on the scale of Wallingford existed, and what the effects of it were. Ault and Clanchy are the only historians to have directly

⁹ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 178-189; quotation from n. 54 on p. 292.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 189.

¹¹ These areas are the focus of the studies presented in M. Prestwich, (ed.), *Liberties and Identities in the Medieval British Isles* (Woodbridge, 2008).

¹² Frame, *Political Development of the British Isles*.

addressed the honour of Wallingford's jurisdiction, and observed it to be extensive. Neither, however, engaged in a complete examination of the honour's jurisdiction. The following study investigates the nature of the honour's relationship with the king's government, and the jurisdiction it had as a result of this.

When, in 1166, Henry II passed the 'Assize of Clarendon' in order to reform England's criminal jurisdiction, one of his intended purposes was to establish that the sheriff should be allowed to carry out the king's justice throughout the realm's jurisdictions, whatever the claims of others. The text of the assize specifically provided that the sheriff's jurisdiction in the view of frankpledge and in the capture of criminals should be operative in all private castles and honours in whomsoever's jurisdiction they lay.¹³ This provision was qualified in two clauses with the phrase that this should apply 'even in the honour of Wallingford' implying that the assumption might be that the assize of Clarendon might not apply there.¹⁴ Thus even as early as 1166, the honour was being treated as a special case; almost as a state within a state. Although the assize of Clarendon apparently limited the honour's extensive jurisdiction, the steadily growing volume of extant documentary evidence relating to local government and the administration of justice reveals that, still in the thirteenth century, the honour of Wallingford had a high level of independence from the procedures of royal government and its officers. This section shows that the lord of Wallingford had jurisdiction in the

¹³ Stubbs, *Select Charters*, pp. 143-6.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 144 (clause 9): *Et non sit aliquis infra castellum vel extra castellum, nec etiam in honore Walingeford, qui vetet vicecomites intrare in curiam vel terram suam ad videndos francos plegios, et quod omnes sint sub plegiis: et ante vicecomites mittantur sub libero plegio*; and clause 11: *Et nulli sint in civitate vel burgo vel castello vel extra, nec in honore etiam de Walingeford, qui vetent vicecomites intrare in terram suam vel socam suam, ad capiendum illos qui rettati fuerint vel publicati quod sint robatores vel murratores vel latrones vel receptores, eorum, vel utlagati vel rettati deforesta; sed praecipit quod juvent illos ad capiendum eos*.

honour's manors that was equivalent to that of a sheriff; a privilege that by the end of the thirteenth century was described as 'return of writs'. It also shows that the honour had a distinct relationship to the general eyre, though this was greater in theory than in practice. It involved the holding of special sessions, and profits arising from within the honour were accrued by the earls of Cornwall. In practice, the honour's jurisdiction was most pronounced in the field of crown pleas, where again the honorial administration appears to have replaced the county administration.

4.1.1 Background and context: the lords of the honour of Wallingford, 1154-1300

The following analysis covers a period of prolonged royal lordship when the honour was in the hands of the king, followed by a slightly shorter period of seventy years (1231-1300) when it was in the hands of the earls of Cornwall. The privileged position of the honour, however, means that after 1230, its administration was in the hands of Richard, earl of Cornwall and his son, and their officials to a much greater extent than was the case for most other lordships of the period. As the bulk of the records of the earls' administration have not survived from this period, we have very little evidence of the jurisdiction of the honour. It is fortunate, however, that long periods of royal lordship of the honour preceded and followed the earls' tenure. While the king was the lord, it is possible to trace something of the honour's sphere of activity through the increasingly abundant surviving royal records.

The context in which the honour's jurisdiction existed in the thirteenth century is significant. The honour was granted by Henry III in 1231 to his younger brother,

Richard, earl of Cornwall and at the time, count of Poitou.¹⁵ At this date Richard was the wealthiest baron in England, and one of the most powerful in the realm. He was a crusader of some distinction, and was elected ‘King of the Romans’ in 1257, making him a significant figure on the wider European stage. His rights of jurisdiction within the honour therefore have to be seen in this context. Richard’s personal standing, wealth and power can be seen to have contributed to the maintenance of his rights within the honour of Wallingford against rival claims, as these rights contributed to the power and prestige of the earl. David Carpenter has argued that Henry III was especially generous towards Richard and other magnates and allowed them a great deal of independence, while Edward I adopted a less liberal policy towards the holding of franchises.¹⁶

Wallingford became Earl Richard’s principal residence and head of his national administration that covered lands across England. Although he took his title from the county of Cornwall, Richard had an equally important power base in the upper Thames valley, in the area around Wallingford castle. Over large parts of this region, local government was almost entirely in the hands of the earl. The honour of St Valery intermingled with that of Wallingford, while the honour of Berkhamsted covered the area immediately to the east of the Wallingford/St. Valery lands. Each of these three great honours was vested with similar jurisdictional privileges, primarily over the peasantry. Richard also dominated those who did not live within his lordship through his possession of the three Chiltern Hundreds of Oxfordshire, which included manors of the honours of Wallingford and St Valery, but also other lands. Richard was therefore lord of a whole network of jurisdictions and lands. These legal structures would have been given life by

¹⁵ *CChR 1226-1257*, p. 139.

¹⁶ Carpenter, ‘King, Magnates and Society’, pp. 49-62, 69.

his influence over appointments of officers nominally still outside his control such as the sheriffs (several of his men were sheriffs of Oxfordshire in this period); and also by the earl's physical presence in the castles of Wallingford and Berkhamsted. Wallingford was the centre of Richard's administration, where he ensured that the castle was one of the grandest in England. It is in these circumstances that we must view the jurisdiction of the honour of Wallingford.¹⁷

First, the physical area in which the honour's jurisdiction operated must be established. In some great liberties of the period, a lord's franchisal jurisdiction might cover a specific block of territory. This could be a group of hundreds, as in the case of the liberty of Bury St Edmund's, St Alban's, Ely, or the honour of Pontefract, or a whole county, as in the case of Cheshire and Durham.¹⁸ It might also be defined as the area within a certain distance from the liberty's political centre, such as in the *banlieu* of Ramsey, which for instance, was defined as the area within three miles of the high altar of the church.¹⁹ In the case of the liberty of the honour of Wallingford, the evidence suggests that we are dealing not with a particular hundred, *banlieu* or other territorial block, but with the scattered lands of the honour. This is an interesting point as the lands of the honour were spread throughout several counties, and among the lands of other lords. Manors of the honour often included only parts of villis which contained one or more other manors. The complexities of enforcing his jurisdiction over these scattered estates must have been considerably greater for the lord of Wallingford than for those whose liberties consisted of more integrated territories. That said, most great magnates held a range of differing jurisdictions over wide geographical areas.

¹⁷ This is relevant to the association of liberties and status in: Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 178-189.

¹⁸ Cam, *Liberties and Communities*, pp. 184-5.

¹⁹ *RH*, ii, p. 605; Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 108-116.

4.1.2 The honour's privileges and their origins

The earliest full statement of the privileges of the honour of Wallingford that survives is Earl Edmund's return to Edward I's *quo warranto* proceedings in 1284. Here Edmund claims to have the franchises of 'return of writs, pleas of replevin (*placita de vetito namii*), assize of bread and ale and the view of frankpledge through the whole of the honour of Wallingford.'²⁰ The franchise of 'return of writs' meant that its holder could exclude the sheriff and all other royal officials from the manors of the honour, and was one of the rarest royal franchises found in the thirteenth century. It was only a relatively small number of the greatest magnates that held this franchise and, of them, Michael Clanchy points out, it was most common among members of the king's close family, both physical, as in the case of the earls of Cornwall, and spiritual, as in the case of great abbeys such as Reading, Westminster and Battle.²¹

Pleas of *vee de nam*, or replevin, might be brought against a sheriff to recover chattels taken by him as distraint. This royal jurisdiction was seldom granted out to private lords.²² The assize of bread and ale was another area of royal jurisdiction that involved the regulation of the making of bread and the brewing of beer and was essentially concerned with weights and measures, though in this context its primary value to the lord of Wallingford was financial, it being unlikely to have conferred any right to make the law on these matters.²³ Finally, the view of frankpledge was concerned with

²⁰ PRO: JUST 1/48, m. 47. This account was omitted from the printed edition of the *Placita Quo Warranto* (Record Commission, 1818).

²¹ Clanchy, 'Introduction', *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, p. xxviii.

²² Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, p. 587; Woodbine, 'A Case of Misnomer', p. 67.

²³ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, p. 581-2.

what might be termed policing; that is the catching of criminals. It involved ensuring that all men over the age of twelve were within a tithing group; the tithing groups then being responsible for their members' good behaviour.²⁴ The view of frankpledge was therefore the principal method by which the king's peace was maintained day-to-day and was the point at which the king's local representative came into contact with the peasantry. Important though this was, it is interesting that this was the most common of the franchises Earl Edmund claimed for Wallingford in 1284. Many lords, from relatively humble knights to the greatest magnates held the view in their manors, while the predominantly greater men who held private hundreds also took the view of frankpledge as this was done by the sheriff at the hundred court where the view was still in royal hands.

When the honour of Wallingford was granted by King Edward II to Queen Isabella in 1317, a full description of the the franchises appurtenant to the honour was included in the record of the grant enrolled on the patent rolls. The entry on the roll states that on 8 June 1317 the queen was granted the following within the honours of Wallingford and St Valery:

hundreds, views of frankpledge etc. of all return of writs and summonses, redemptions and amercements of all men and tenements thereof and issues forfeited, and all that pertains to the king of year day and waste, forfeitures and murders in any of his courts, as well as before the king as in the Chancery and before the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer and other justices so that she may receive the same by the hands of the king's bailiffs and ministers.²⁵

It is shown below that 'hundreds' in this case appears to mean that the court of the lord of Wallingford was to have the jurisdiction of the hundred court over tenants of the honour,

²⁴ Cam, *The Hundred*, p. 124.

²⁵ *CPR 1313-1317*, pp. 668.

of which the view of frankpledge was an important element and which dealt with the capture and punishment of criminals.²⁶ The lord of Wallingford therefore had the same authority the sheriff did elsewhere. This kind of jurisdiction is that which Pollock and Maitland characterised as ‘low justice’ and must have been equivalent, in terms of jurisdiction if not geography, to the private hundreds that were common in England at the time.²⁷ Less common are the other franchises that the 1317 grant conferred. Return of writs and summonses, redemptions and amercements of all men and tenements together with all that pertains to the king of waste, forfeitures and murders in any of his courts, are all much more rare devolutions of powers of ‘high justice’ in Pollock and Maitland’s terms.²⁸ Return of writs effectively gave the honour exclusive jurisdiction over all matters normally dealt with by the sheriff, while the right to summonses, redemptions and amercements of tenants gave the lord of Wallingford profits of justice arising from the honour’s tenants in whatever court they happened to be in. The grant of the honour to Queen Isabella stated in the fullest terms, the extensive nature of Wallingford’s jurisdiction. It will be argued that much of this jurisdiction can be detected earlier in the thirteenth century.

The first questions to be addressed are, how early did the honour gain its privileges, and how did they vary over time? It could be that it was the honour’s royal status under Henry II that gave it its special position. The specific mention of the honour in the assize of Clarendon may well have been included precisely because the honour was held by the king himself. Indeed, Wallingford had the distinction of having been the headquarters of the Angevin party from the end of the reign of King Stephen. The final

²⁶ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, i, p. 559.

²⁷ Cam, *The Hundred*, pp. 137-45; 260-86.

²⁸ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, i, pp. 582-4.

siege at the climax of the civil war took place at Wallingford, while the agreement between Henry of Anjou and King Stephen was sometimes referred to as the Treaty of Wallingford. In the year after Henry had ascended the throne, the first major council of prelates and magnates of the reign met in March first at Westminster, and then moved after Easter, to Wallingford where the important issue of the succession of the crown was agreed; an issue of particular significance for those who were emerging from the uncertainty of the previous twenty years.²⁹ Wallingford was therefore of great importance to the new Angevin regime and possibly held a symbolic significance for Angevin supporters.

How did these jurisdictional privileges operate in practice? The royal records of the period can shed some light on this. As information about the working of royal government becomes increasingly plentiful later in the thirteenth century, it becomes possible to understand more of the ways in which local government operated within the honour of Wallingford. This is observable in several main areas: the honour's position in relation to that of the sheriff, that of the eyre, and that of the exchequer. All these areas of royal government were closely linked and these three areas have been chosen in order to facilitate explanation.

²⁹ *Gervase of Canterbury*, i, p. 162; Cerda, 'The Councils of Henry II', pp. 28, 215, 218-35.

4.1.3 The Honour and the Exchequer

This section will examine the honour's relationship with the royal exchequer. Closely related to this are certain aspects of the internal administration of the honour, but these will be examined below. Here we examine the ways in which the honour was accounted for at the exchequer, its financial value to the crown and the honour's role in collecting taxes.

Accountability of the Honour at the Exchequer, 1130-1300

The honour was accounted for at the exchequer independently of any county. The normal procedure of the exchequer, described by Richard fitzNigel in the twelfth century, was for the sheriff of a county to come before the exchequer twice a year to account for the money that was due to the king from the sheriff's bailiwick.³⁰ The record of the honour of Wallingford is complex and irregular. It is therefore necessary briefly to outline the types of account relating to the honour that are found in the pipe rolls before examining these accounts in more detail. Despite the relatively routine character of the pipe rolls in general, which remained similar in their form and content throughout the period, the record of the honour is not consistent. Some of these inconsistencies are the result of the honour, or parts of it, being given away; others seem to be the result of different administrative procedures being used at different times. There were four main elements of the lordship of Wallingford as it appears in the pipe rolls. These are the Borough of Wallingford; the manor of High Wycombe; escheats; and the records of scutages. The different elements appear in different combinations both together and separately,

³⁰ *Dialogus de Scaccario*, pp. 118-123.

depending on the year. It is only towards the end of Henry II's reign that all of these are recorded together in the pipe rolls, with that of 30 Henry II (1184) containing the first single account for all elements of the honour: High Wycombe, other manors of the honour, and the borough of Wallingford.³¹

Brian fitzCount paid £39 13s 4d into the treasury in 1130, while the townsmen were pardoned an aid of £15 on account of their poverty.³² In the series of pipe rolls surviving from the beginning of Henry II's reign, the farm of the borough was accounted for independently. When Richard, earl of Cornwall received the honour in 1231, Henry III ordered the bailiffs of Wallingford to render the borough's farm to the earl rather than to the exchequer, thus uniting the borough with the honour under Richard's lordship.³³ In other ways, as we shall see, the borough retained its autonomy and its own jurisdictional privileges.

The manor of High Wycombe was also accounted for by its men, who from early in Henry II's reign accounted for a farm of £72 at the exchequer.³⁴ From 1165, Henry fitzGerold the king's chamberlain paid the farm.³⁵ He appears to have been given administrative responsibility for the honour as a whole, for by this time the demesne manors of Iver, Aston Rowant and Chalgrove, that had been alienated by Henry II, escheated to the crown. The roll of 1169 recorded that Henry fitzGerold rendered account of £60 of the farm of Iver (Buckinghamshire) for a year and a half, £36 6s of the farm of Aston Rowant (Oxfordshire) also for a year and a half, £118 18s 3d of the farm of Chalgrove (Oxfordshire) of three and a half years, and £47 3s 8d of the lands of Nicholas

³¹ *Pipe Roll 30 Henry II*, pp. 57-8.

³² *Pipe Roll 31 Henry I*, p. 139.

³³ *CR 1227-1231*, p. 568.

³⁴ *Pipe Roll 2, 3, 4 Henry II*, p. 141; *Pipe Roll 6 Henry II*, p. 40.

³⁵ *Pipe Roll 10 Henry II*, p. 30.

Basset of two years, totalling £262 7s 11d which was paid into the treasury. From 1172, Thomas Basset, a tenant of the honour and a leading curialis rendered account for these manors, as did his son, Gilbert from 1179 until the reign of John. The escheated manors were gradually alienated until we find in 1202, the following entry: *Compotus non redditur de honore de Warenges quia omnes terre honoris illius date sunt*.³⁶ Alan Basset, a younger son of Thomas Basset, had been granted the manor of High Wycombe in 1201 for a farm of £20 a year which he rendered at the exchequer, presumably still collecting the £72 farm from the men of the honour and thus making a £52 gain for himself.³⁷ When Earl Richard received the honour and the farm of the borough in 1231, he did not gain the farm of Wycombe, which was still being rendered at the exchequer in 1259 by Alan's son, Fulk Basset, bishop of London.³⁸

So the honour was accounted for by its keeper rather than by different sheriffs. It was therefore financially independent and its relationship with the exchequer, though far from unique, was nevertheless special. Related to the honour's relationship to the exchequer was the honour's role in the collection of taxes.

The Collection of Taxes

During the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, taxation effectively fell within the remit of the honour of Wallingford. The knightly tenants of the honour paid scutage on their knights' fees. By the thirteenth century, after the issue of Magna Carta, scutages were accompanied by general taxation that required wider approval from the developing

³⁶ *Pipe Roll 4 John*, pp. 35-6.

³⁷ *Rot. Chart.*, p. 107; *Pipe Roll 4 John*, p. 6.

³⁸ PRO, E 372/103, rot. 3, m. 1d. Transcript of R. Cassidy consulted.

institution of parliament. The evidence suggests that the honour of Wallingford was involved in the collection of both of these taxes.

English kings collected scutages with increasing regularity from the start of the reign of Henry II, and the frequency of scutages increased exponentially under Richard and John.³⁹ The pipe rolls record the collection of scutages throughout the period and it is significant that rather than scutage being collected from the honour's knightly tenants in each county by the sheriff, the scutage was accounted for and paid together. The first pipe roll of John's reign recorded that the knights of the honour of Wallingford owed 200 marks and a half for the scutage of two marks after the king's coronation.⁴⁰ The scutage for the honour was usually accounted for on behalf of the honour as a whole, usually by the keeper of the honour, with a small number of individual tenants accounting for themselves. In the Pipe Roll of 33 Henry II, Gilbert Basset, keeper of the honour of Wallingford, rendered account of £100 15s for the scutage of Galloway.⁴¹ A similar but not identical sum of £100 5s was accounted for in 1194, which is possibly the same sum as the 'third scutage of Richard's reign' mentioned in 1202.⁴² For an honour that in 1212 was assessed at 99½ fees,⁴³ these figures would appear to represent approximately twenty shillings per knights' fee being owed for scutage. The substantial sum being paid suggests that the whole honour accounted together. A writ of 1218 confirms the role of the keeper of the honour in performing this duty; Matthew Brand, a Wallingford tenant,

³⁹ Carpenter, 'Second Century', pp. 39-40.

⁴⁰ *Pipe Roll 1 John*, p. 230.

⁴¹ *Pipe Roll 33 Henry II*, p. 22.

⁴² *Pipe Roll 6 Richard I*, p. 17; *Pipe Roll 4 John*, pp. 35-6.

⁴³ *Book of Fees*, pp. 118-120.

was allowed 6 marks for his expenses in collecting scutage of the honour of Wallingford.⁴⁴

Once the honour had been taken over by Richard of Cornwall in 1231, the details of the administration of scutage are less visible. In 1241/2, William fitzEllis owed half a mark for the scutage of Kerry, but by this date the honour had ceased to be accounted for in the pipe rolls and represents a debt from an old scutage still not paid by William.⁴⁵ The absence of the honour's scutage from the pipe rolls does not necessarily mean that scutage was not collected as it had been before. It was probably collected by Richard of Cornwall, who did not have to account for it at the exchequer. Indeed, the scutage of 1242 was the first that was collected by sheriffs on a county basis, yet the following note was made in the record for the collection of the scutage in Buckinghamshire:

Libertas Comitis Ricardi.

Feoda et nomina villarum domini Comitis Ricardi in comitatu Buk', qui quidem comes nullum patitur vicecomitem habere ingressum in libertate sua ad faciendam inquisitionem de feodis, dicens se tenere honorem Walingfordie pro tribus militibus.

[The Liberty of Earl Richard.

Fees and names of vills of the lord Earl Richard in the county of Buckinghamshire, which the earl does not allow the sheriff to have ingress in his liberty to make inquisition of fees, saying he holds the honour of Wallingford for three knights (fees).]⁴⁶

There then follows a list of Buckinghamshire vills that were within the honour. The terms by which Richard held the honour were designed to allow him to keep the scutage he collected and it appears that this is what happened in 1242. Richard held the honour and castle of Wallingford together with the manor of Watlington for three knights' fees.

⁴⁴ *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum 1204-1224*, p. 363.

⁴⁵ *Pipe Roll 26 Henry III*, p. 295. The scutage of Kerry was mentioned in 1230: *Pipe Roll 14 Henry III*, p. 169.

⁴⁶ *Book of Fees*, pp. 882-3.

It is likely that he continued to collect the scutage on 100 or more fees himself, though we have no records of this.

It was not only in the collection of scutage that the honour played a role. When, in 1225, Henry III's minority government collected a tax on a fifteenth on movable goods for the young king's second coronation, there is evidence that it was assessed and collected within the honour by its officials.⁴⁷ The patent roll for that year contains the record of a series of royal letters sent out to four knights in each county regarding the assessment and collection of this tax headed, *Forma quintedecime assidende et colligende*.⁴⁸ The names of the four knights to whom the letters patent were sent were entered on the roll after the text of the letters. After the names of the four knights of Middlesex, the following text was added:

Mandatum est militibus, libere tenentibus, et aliis de honore Walingfordie in comitatu Middlesexie, quod eis intendentes sint et respondentes ad quintamdecimam omnium mobilium assidendam et colligendam, non obstante precepto quod dominus rex eis fecit ut essent intendentes et respondentes baillivo honoris Walingfordie.⁴⁹

[It was ordered to the knights, free tenants, and others of the honour of Wallingford in the county of Middlesex that they be intendent to them [the knights] and answer to them for the fifteenth on all movables to be assessed and collected, notwithstanding the order that the king made to them that they were to be attendant on and answer to the bailiffs of the honour of Wallingford.]

This demonstrates firstly that the men of the honour were not exempt from this tax. Secondly, it highlights that the liberty of the honour was not confined just to the knightly tenants of the honour but to a much wider range of people; 'knights, free tenants and others of the honour of Wallingford.' Thirdly, although the four knights were charged with collecting the tax even from those within the honour of Wallingford, the fact that

⁴⁷ For this tax, see D.A. Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London, 1990), pp. 379-382.

⁴⁸ *CPR 1216-1225*, pp. 560-567.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 562.

such an order was required would seem to suggest that those within the honour outside of Middlesex did answer to the bailiffs and so were exempt from their respective counties' arrangements.

The records of other aids before and after confirm that officers of the honour assessed and collected taxes within its vill. The carucage of 1220 had been administered separately within the honour. Henry de Scaccario collected the tax from each of the honour's vill in five counties; the total number of carucates being assessed at 903 $\frac{1}{6}$.⁵⁰ Similarly the aid called for the marriage of the king's sister in 1235/6 was also collected from Wallingford tenants by honorial officials separately from the county administration.⁵¹

In addition to the honour, Richard's rights over the borough encompassed the right to collect tallage, a tax usually levied by the king on royal demesne manors. Richard was granted permission by the king to tallage Wallingford on a number of occasions throughout the thirteenth century, often alongside other royal demesne properties that he held such as Wilton, Chichester and Exeter. The close rolls recorded tallages of Wallingford being granted in 1234, 1235, 1238, 1242, 1244, 1255, and 1268.⁵²

The honour of Wallingford was thus treated by the exchequer as a special case. Its officers were either accountable at the exchequer directly, or not at all, and in the making of fines and the collection of scutage, the honour's tenants often dealt with the exchequer together. The absence of exchequer accounts for the honour after 1231, and

⁵⁰ *Book of Fees*, i, pp. 312-15.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 554-56.

⁵² *CR 1231-1234*, p. 363; *1234-1237*, p. 215; *1237-1242*, p. 109; *1242-1247*, pp. 174, *1254-1256*, p. 34; *1264-1268*, p. 463.

possibly even in the twelfth century as well, point to extensive freedoms from exchequer control.

4.1.4 The honour and the general eyre

The eyre was the principal element in the projection of royal power into the localities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and all sections of society in all jurisdictions came within the purview of its justices. They dealt with crown and civil pleas, including the maintenance of royal rights, and later in the thirteenth century they also dealt with complaints against royal officials.⁵³ Privileges with regard to the general eyre were very rare and nearly all of England was within the eyre's jurisdiction. The honour of Wallingford was not exempt from its jurisdiction, though it seems that in theory at least it had privileges; on some occasions, special sessions of the eyre were held for the honour in each county the eyre justices visited, while the earls of Cornwall received the profits of amercements of those living within the honour's jurisdiction. The honour also provided presenting juries and therefore had the responsibility of presenting crown pleas at the eyre. The rights of the lord of Wallingford in relation to the eyre would have been very profitable, but it is significant that it was still the king's justices that presided, doing the king's justice, rather than the earl's own agents doing justice on his behalf.

Before examining these aspects of the relationship between the honour and the general eyre, a word should be said about the nature of the evidence. Plea rolls survive for a number of eyres in counties that contained the honour of Wallingford from the 1220s onwards. Plea rolls of eyres held in Berkshire survive from the visitations of the

⁵³ Meekings, 'Introduction', *Surrey Eyre 1235*, i, p. 5.

years 1241, 1248, 1261, 1268 and 1284; of Oxfordshire eyres from 1235, 1241, 1247, 1261, 1268, and 1285; of Buckinghamshire eyres from 1227, 1232, 1241, 1247, 1261, 1272, and 1286; of Wiltshire eyres from 1249, 1268, 1281, and 1289; and finally of the Middlesex eyre of 1274.⁵⁴ There is therefore a wealth of surviving evidence for the eyre from which much can be discerned about its working in these counties and how it interacted with the extensive private jurisdiction of the honour. Eyre rolls survive from a range of dates across the thirteenth century and from most of the counties where the honour lay. The evidence is limited, however, in the sense that no plea rolls that relate to one of these counties from before 1227. This means that our knowledge of the relationship between the eyre and the honour of Wallingford almost entirely concerns the tenure of the earls of Cornwall. Whereas in examining the honour's relationship with respect to the exchequer, the historian has access to a greater body of evidence while the honour was under the crown, in the case of the honour's relationship with respect of the eyre, the situation is reversed and most of our information comes from the later period.

The most significant aspect of the relationship between the eyre and the honour of Wallingford is that the honour appears to have been entitled to special sessions of the eyre. It is difficult to build a clear picture of what this special session entailed as there is no clear statement describing what this consisted of. Both Wallingford and Reading had special sessions of the eyre in all surviving Berkshire eyre rolls.⁵⁵ Whether it was the borough of Wallingford that claimed the special session or the honour is not clear. The confusion between honour and borough seems not to be solely that of the modern historian; contemporaries too appear to conflate them and apply different labels. In 1284

⁵⁴ Crook, *Records of the General Eyre*. Some of these have been edited and printed, while original manuscripts of all are preserved in the Public Record Office.

⁵⁵ Clanchy, 'Introduction', *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, pp. xxix-xxx.

the burgesses claimed a special session citing an 1155 charter of Henry II.⁵⁶ No similar claim of Edmund, earl of Cornwall can be found in respect of the honour. Nevertheless, we have seen that Earl Richard had jurisdiction over both the honour and the borough. Clanchy states that the reason for the special session at Wallingford was that the burgesses had the right not to be impleaded outside their borough, and the plea roll of the 1248 eyre contains the heading, ‘Placita de Honor de Walingford’ on the dorse of membrane 19.⁵⁷ With the exception of one case involving land at Newnham Murren, which was a village in the honour neighbouring Wallingford on the Oxfordshire side of the Thames, no connection with the honour can be discerned in any of the other fifteen cases. Most of these involved the borough. Where a tenant of the honour, Thomas of Appleton did bring a case, directly following the ‘Pleas of the Honour of Wallingford’ section, it is preceded by the heading, ‘De Comitatu’ explicitly placing it outside of the special session. So, was the special session at Wallingford a privilege of the royal borough of Wallingford only? Evidence that the honour had a separate session elsewhere would suggest not.

A separate session of the eyre in Wiltshire or Middlesex cannot be found, but there do appear to have been sessions of the eyre held at High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire for the honour of Wallingford. In 1241, when the eyre justices visited both Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, the session at High Wycombe on 3 May was held for both Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire business of the honour of Wallingford.⁵⁸ In 1247, the Buckinghamshire eyre roll contains a section headed ‘De Honore

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. xxx.

⁵⁷ *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, p. 180.

⁵⁸ JUST 1/695, m. 16d; JUST 1/55; Crook, *Records of the General Eyre*, p. 102.

Wallingford’ while the 1261 roll contains a section for ‘pleas at Wycombe’.⁵⁹ Interestingly the Oxfordshire eyre rolls contain no such reference to pleas held at Wycombe after 1241.

Civil Pleas

Although there appear to have been special sessions of the eyre for the honour of Wallingford, much of the business recorded in the relevant sections of the eyre rolls was not connected with the honour. This was the case in the 1248 Berkshire visitation just mentioned, but it can also be seen elsewhere. Taking the 1241 eyre as an example, the scribe wrote the heading, ‘Pleas taken at Wycombe on the Friday after the feast of St Philip and St James on the return of William of York and his colleagues from Oxfordshire’ clearly identifying this separate session.⁶⁰ Yet of the thirty-six entries entered in this section, only five involved individuals for whom a connection with the honour can be traced, and only one involving a plea of nuisance between Gilbert Basset and the Knights Templar on the one hand and Richard de Turri on the other over mills they had built in Wycombe, involved land within the honour.⁶¹ Other cases in the roll involved land and tenants of the honour but were not enrolled under the heading for pleas at Wycombe. The scribe appears to have used marginal notes next to individual cases to indicate that they related to the honour. So Reginald of Whitchurch brought a writ of novel disseisin against his neighbour Roger of Harpsden complaining that Roger had disseised him of twelve feet of his meadow abutting Roger’s arable land in one place and

⁵⁹ JUST 1/56, m. 22d; JUST 1/57, mm. 2-11d.

⁶⁰ JUST 1/695, m. 16d.

⁶¹ Ibid.; *Oxfordshire Eyre 1241*, no. 675.

six feet in another, a marginal note indicates that this was an honour of Wallingford case.⁶² Even when a case was not heard at a separate session of the eyre, therefore, it was recorded as a Wallingford case. This may have been to do with the fact that Richard of Cornwall would have been eligible to receive the profits of justice for those within the honour of Wallingford, which will be discussed below.

Records of some of the sessions at the Wallingford eyre might have been lost even when the main plea rolls for the counties survive. This is suggested by the treatment of the honour of Berkhamsted in the eyre rolls. Berkhamsted was also a great liberty and was also held by the earls of Cornwall in the thirteenth century. In almost every eyre roll that survives from Buckinghamshire visitations, the honour of Berkhamsted was given a separate section of the eyre roll.⁶³

So it would seem that the use of the eyre by tenants of the honour of Wallingford to pursue civil cases was no different from anyone else. Some tenants did indeed attend the honour's special sessions. Alan Darches, who held the manor of Eythorpe in Buckinghamshire of the honour of Wallingford for three knights' fees sued a man named Richard over rights to common pasture in Eythorpe at the High Wycombe session of the Buckinghamshire eyre of 1232.⁶⁴ Wycombe was, however, a more convenient distance from Darches' manor of Eythorpe than Newport Pagnell where the eyre was also held. Similarly in 1262, a case involving land at Quainton, held of the honour by the Malet family, was heard at the Wycombe session of the eyre.⁶⁵ Again, Quainton was

⁶² Ibid., no. 492. Similar marginalia can be found elsewhere in JUST 1/695, for which see *Oxfordshire Eyre 1241*, at nos. 501, 545, 550, 599, 630, 649. A similar phenomenon is found in the 1261 Oxfordshire eyre, JUST 1/701.

⁶³ (1232) JUST 1/62, m. 27d; (1241) JUST 1/55, m. 14; (1247) JUST 1/56, m. 18; (1261) JUST 1/57, m. 14d.

⁶⁴ JUST 1/ 62, m. 17d.

⁶⁵ JUST 1/57, m. 3d.

geographically closer to Wycombe than it was to Newport Pagnell, but it does provide another instance of an honorial case being heard at the honour's special session. This was far from the general rule.

Other tenants of the honour had their cases heard at ordinary sessions of the eyre. A dispute between the two branches of the same family who had held of the honour of Wallingford since the eleventh century is a case in point. In 1247, a case was heard by the king's justices in eyre in Oxfordshire involving a dispute between William of Suleham and Ralph of Chesterton over land claimed by William of Suleham in Chesterton on the grounds that a certain ancestor of his named Ralph was seised of the fee in the reign of Henry II.⁶⁶ Both represented branches of the family of fitzAmaury which was descended from Amaury de Dreux, a Norman tenant of Miles Crispin recorded in Domesday.⁶⁷ Their link with the honour was very well established and was many generations old. The disputed land involved was almost certainly within the honour as both the manors of Chesterton in northern Oxfordshire and Suleham near the River Thames in Berkshire were held of the honour by knight service. This is the kind of case that could have been heard at the honour court. The eyre justices heard all cases that were begun by a royal writ and so it is unsurprising that this dispute was being pursued in the royal courts. The purpose in citing it here is because it was enrolled on the plea roll among all the other normal civil pleas of the Oxfordshire eyre, which were heard at Oxford. No mention of the honour of Wallingford is made, either within the account of the case or in the margin of the roll. This clear incident of a dispute between two knightly tenants of the honour involving land within the honour was not heard at a special

⁶⁶ JUST 1/699, m. 8.

⁶⁷ See chapter 3.1.4.

session of the eyre, and there is no indication of Wallingford honorial jurisdiction in the record at all. In the same roll, prominent knights of the honour, Fulk of Rycote and Sampson Foliot had different civil actions of their own heard apparently at the ordinary Oxford session of the eyre.⁶⁸

The precise working of the honour's jurisdiction in relation to the eyre is not clear, at least as far as civil pleas are concerned. From the evidence that has been pieced together here, to summarise, it can be confidently said that the clerks and probably the justices in eyre were aware of the special jurisdiction of the honour of Wallingford. It is also clear that there was no obligation for anyone engaging in legal action to attend these special sessions, just as there was no obligation for civil action to be heard at the eyre as opposed to the king's courts at Westminster. The impression gained from a study of the surviving eyre rolls suggests that in practice, this theoretical jurisdiction was not without ambiguities.

Crown Pleas

The administration of crown pleas at the eyres presents the historian with a picture of the vitality of the honour's jurisdiction in the thirteenth century that is similar in some areas but different in others. As with civil pleas, crown pleas of the honour were set apart from the rest of the county in many, but not all, eyre rolls. The plea roll of the Buckinghamshire eyre of 1232 contains clear sections for crown pleas at Wycombe as well as for civil pleas at Wycombe as opposed to the rest of the civil and crown pleas

⁶⁸ JUST 1/ 699, mm. 19d, 25d.

which were heard at Newport Pagnell.⁶⁹ As with similar sections for civil pleas, an examination of the crown pleas heard at Wycombe in 1232 reveals that they were not exclusively related to the honour of Wallingford, though a number of them were.⁷⁰ The surviving roll of crown pleas of the Oxfordshire eyre of 1285 contains no distinct section for crown pleas of the honour of Wallingford, though many were recorded in it and, as we shall see, the jurisdiction of the honour in this area was as apparent in these cases as ever.⁷¹

The treatment of the crown pleas in the surviving eyre rolls, like that of the civil pleas, suggests recognition of the honour's special jurisdiction, even if the method of recording and indeed hearing cases from this jurisdiction was not consistent. The same lack of clarity is found when we turn to the procedure of bringing crown pleas to the eyre: the presenting juries. The process of hearing crown pleas has been described by many historians.⁷² The crown pleas were presented by juries from each of the hundreds in a county in answer to the articles of the eyre. These presenting juries were selected by two electors, chosen by the hundred bailiff at the opening of the eyre. There is evidence that the honour was a presenting area in itself. In the Berkshire eyre of 1248, 'Pleas of the Crown of the Honour of Wallingford' were enrolled at the end of the plea roll, after the crown pleas of all the hundreds of Berkshire.⁷³ A similar section can be found in the Berkshire eyre of 1284, in which the heading, 'Crown pleas for the liberty of Wallingford held at Wallingford' appears.⁷⁴ It is important not to confuse the honour and the borough,

⁶⁹ JUST 1/ 62, mm. 4-8d., 16d., 17d.-27d.; Crook, *Records of the General Eyre*, p. 89.

⁷⁰ JUST 1/62, mm. 4d., 5.

⁷¹ JUST 1/705.

⁷² Most recently, S. Stewart, 'Introduction', *Surrey Eyre 1263*, pp. lxvii, cxxxv.

⁷³ *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, p. 397.

⁷⁴ JUST 1/48, m. 46d.

however. In both cases the entries following these headings relate to the borough of Wallingford which had its own privileges, including, as we shall see below, its own coroners. On the other hand, this section appears to be related to the whole honour, involving manors from across the honour and not just the borough or those in Berkshire. It also includes Edmund of Cornwall's claims regarding the franchises of the honour made in response to the *quo warranto* inquiries, as well as gaol deliveries relating to the honour. We know that both the honour and the borough were separate jurisdictions though each with similar privileges with regard to the eyre from the appearance in the 1248 eyre roll of presenting juries for both.

One way to distinguish the privileges of the honour as distinct from the borough is to compare the situation in Berkshire with elsewhere. The Oxfordshire eyre roll of 1241 makes an interesting comparison. At the end of the roll, the scribe included a calendar of jurors for each of the hundreds of Oxfordshire. Fourteen hundreds are named with their jurors listed, followed by the heading, *Walingf' honor*, through which a line has been drawn and below which an empty space was left in apparent expectation of a list of jurors at a later date. Following this are lists of the juries of the boroughs of the county.⁷⁵ All this implies that the scribe anticipated that the honour of Wallingford would be a separate presenting area but that in the event it was not. The difficulties in identifying low-status individuals in this period make it hard to say with any precision how criminal cases arising from within the honour of Wallingford were dealt with by the justices in eyre. Most entries on the eyre rolls however do include toponyms, which help to identify those cases originating within the honour. In 1241, very few of the cases presented by the

⁷⁵ JUST 1/695, m. 20; This is less clear in the published edition, *1241 Oxfordshire Eyre*, ed. Cooper, p. 119.

hundred juries were related to the honour.⁷⁶ No other eyre rolls mention a separate presenting area for the honour. It is difficult to be sure whether this means that the honour was exempt from presenting crown pleas at the eyre, or whether it was the responsibility of the hundreds. In the Buckinghamshire eyre of 1227, a case was heard in which one Emma of Iver drowned at Iver, but the vill did not present the matter either to the sheriff or the coroner and so was amerced.⁷⁷ The scribe noted that inquiry was to be made as to who was the bailiff of Wallingford. Whether the vill of Iver did not present the case because they were within the honour of Wallingford is not clear. The implication is that they reported the death to the bailiff of the honour of Wallingford who failed to present it at the eyre. It was the vill of Iver that was held responsible, however. This would suggest that the presenting juries of hundreds were responsible for those living within the honour of Wallingford.

On the other hand, the 1242 pipe roll recorded that the honour of Wallingford was amerced half a mark for a false presentment.⁷⁸ This was recorded under the account for Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire among the amercements in those counties of Robert of Lexington. This suggests that the honour did form a separate presenting area, and possibly relates to the session of the eyre held in that year at Wycombe for the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire business of the honour of Wallingford. The special treatment of the honour of Wallingford may have been particularly pronounced in 1241 and the justices and clerks of the eyre could have been confronted by administrative problems which meant that in later visitations, the procedure was altered, but this can be

⁷⁶ *Oxfordshire Eyre 1241*, no. 885 relates to Stokenchurch, part of which at least was in the honour of Wallingford.

⁷⁷ *Buckinghamshire Eyre 1227*, no. 517.

⁷⁸ *Pipe Roll 26 Henry III*, p. 299.

no more than speculation as the record evidence does not allow for systematic analysis. The honour clearly did stand apart in its relationship with the general eyre, though it is difficult to be certain of the extent to which the variations in the recording of the eyres represent variations in the procedures used. Once again, the practicalities of administering the eyre appear to have tended towards uniform procedure that ignored the honour's jurisdiction, but in this case, much more so than with civil pleas, the honour's jurisdiction was assumed to have existed in theory at least.

Profits of the eyre

A significant aspect of the relationship between the honour of Wallingford and the general eyre was the fact that the earls of Cornwall received the profits of the eyre for their men of the honour of Wallingford. This was one of the franchises of high justice, alongside special sessions of the eyre, identified by Pollock and Maitland and was valuable financially as well as in terms of status.⁷⁹ This was one of the most heavily controlled franchise available in the thirteenth century but was also one of the most highly prized. Writs granting Earl Richard the profits of the eyres of Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset eyres and a portion of the profits of the Devonshire eyre of 1249 were enrolled on the close roll, but none survive granting him the profits of the eyre for his men of the honour of Wallingford.⁸⁰ On 26 December 1240, William de Haverhull was ordered to give the roll of amercements and fines of the recent eyre of Richard of Lexington in Rutland,⁸¹ but no similar evidence for the honour of Wallingford survives.

⁷⁹ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, pp. 582-3.

⁸⁰ *CR, 1247-1251*, pp. 164, 205; Clanchy, 'Introduction', *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, p. xxxiv.

⁸¹ *CR 1237-1242*, p. 259.

It is likely that he did have this right for his Wallingford tenants and that as the king's brother he was such an exceptional case that no written authorisation was needed, as Clanchy has argued.⁸² Earl Richard's son, Edmund of Cornwall certainly did receive the profits of justice from the Buckinghamshire eyre of 1286. The amercements made at this eyre were recorded separately at the end of the plea roll, where they were organised according to hundred.⁸³ Within each hundred, and in some cases within each vill within the hundred, the amercements of the honour of Wallingford were recorded separately, as indeed were those of the honour of Berkhamsted. This implies that these profits were to be separated from the main profits of the county, and this implication is confirmed by the pipe roll for that year, which records that the sheriff of Buckinghamshire accounted for £960 7s from crown pleas amercements, and that of that sum, Alan de Newenton, the bailiff of Wallingford, received £63 17s 4d.⁸⁴ It is only in the later eyre rolls that separate lists of amercements of the county survive and so it cannot be said with certainty that this or a similar system existed from the 1230s onwards, but it is likely that it did. Indeed it may be that the need for the profits from the honour to be granted to the earl of Cornwall that lay behind the labelling of cases that related to the honour of Wallingford in the marginal notes on the plea rolls that were discussed above.

The king's justices were not excluded from the honour, nor did the lord of Wallingford claim any jurisdiction over justices in eyre, as was the case in other much more privileged liberties such as those of some of the Welsh marcher lords, and certain ecclesiastical liberties. The holding of special sessions of the eyre at Wallingford and at

⁸² Clanchy, 'Introduction', *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, p. xxxv.

⁸³ JUST 1/63, mm. 52-62d.; *Buckinghamshire Eyre 1286*, pp. 461-67.

⁸⁴ PRO, E 372/132, m. 16d; Boatwright, 'Introduction', *Buckinghamshire Eyre 1286*, p. 78.

Wycombe, and the right of the earls of Cornwall to receive the profits of amercements of their men of the honour at the eyre, were however, significant in terms of revenues as well as the status they conferred on the lord of the honour, and in their contribution to a sense of identity.

4.1.5 The honour and the sheriff

It is at the local level where the honour's most extensive jurisdiction lay. By piecing together the evidence of the operation of local government in the honour from the royal records of the period, it becomes apparent that the range of franchises and the way in which they were administered placed the honour of Wallingford effectively outside the jurisdiction of local royal government.

In the period under discussion royal government in the localities is generally held to have been centred on the sheriff who as the king's representative and chief judicial, financial, military and administrative officer in a county, headed all government operations. Though his political influence and prestige may have declined in the thirteenth century, the sheriff remained the main point of contact between central royal government and the localities.⁸⁵ Sheriffs raised troops for the king's army, collected scutage, maintained the king's peace and presided over the county court. It is interesting therefore that the honour of Wallingford seems to have lain outside shrieval jurisdiction. This section explores the way in which the steward of the honour of Wallingford, on behalf of the lord, fulfilled the role and exerted the authority that would otherwise have belonged to the sheriff.

⁸⁵ Cam, *The Hundred*, pp. 1-8; Carpenter, 'Decline of the Curial Sheriff', pp. 1-32.

There are several areas in which the jurisdiction of the honour can be reconstructed from analysis of royal records preserved at the Public Record Office; in the administration of the view of frankpledge, and in the pursuit, arrest and punishment of criminals.

The View of Frankpledge

We have seen that the lord of Wallingford claimed the view of frankpledge throughout the honour of Wallingford.⁸⁶ The view of frankpledge was the process by which the sheriff, at a meeting of the hundred court, inspected the tithing groups into which all males over the age of fourteen were organised and which were collectively responsible for the behaviour of their members. The right of a lord to hold the view for the tenants of his manor was a rare privilege that gave him the right to withdraw his own men from the view held by the sheriff at the hundred court. This was effectively the same jurisdiction that would elsewhere have belonged to the sheriff of a county.

It would be unsurprising if the lord of Wallingford's jurisdiction had diminished over time in the face of the claims of sheriffs of the counties in whose bailiwicks the honour's lands lay, or indeed other landowners. This was not what happened, however. The honour's view continued well beyond the thirteenth century.⁸⁷ In order to understand why the honour retained this jurisdiction for so long, it is necessary to try to understand how it worked in practice.

⁸⁶ *CPR 1313-1317*, pp. 668; see above, p. 135.

⁸⁷ *VCH Oxfordshire*, xvi, [forthcoming].

The earliest extant information regarding the organisation of the view within the honour comes from the inquisition taken at the death of Earl Edmund in 1300 on the earldom's reversion to the crown, and in the case of Oxfordshire, from the evidence of the hundred rolls of 1279. Both formed the basis of Ault's analysis of the honour's jurisdiction.⁸⁸ The inquisition post mortem made at Wallingford on 20 December 1300 relating to 'foreign rents pertaining to the honour of Wallingford in divers counties' states that there were twenty-three views pertaining to the honour; six views held in Oxfordshire, four in Berkshire, two in Gloucestershire, one in Wiltshire, one in Surrey, one in Middlesex, seven in Buckinghamshire.⁸⁹ These are represented in table form below:

⁸⁸ *CIPM*, iii, pp. 456-489; Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 224-232.

⁸⁹ *CIPM*, iii, p. 467.

Table 17. Views pertaining to the honour of Wallingford held by the steward of the honour once a year⁹⁰

County	Number of views	Approximate Number of Wallingford manors in county (in c. 1154)	Places where view of frankpledge was taken once a year
Bedfordshire	1	4	Clapham
Berkshire	4	15	Clapcot, Purley, Donnington, Ardington
Buckinghamshire	7	40	Iver, Wycombe, Marlow, Stanton Barry, Wingrave, Beachendon, Ickford
Gloucestershire	2	5	Rissington, Shenington
Middlesex	1	5	Uxbridge
Oxfordshire	6	40	Bicester, Great Haseley, Kingston Blount, Watlington, Chalgrove, Stoke
Surrey	1	2	Beddington
Wiltshire	1	14	Ogbourne
TOTAL	23	125	

As Ault pointed out, the number of views held by the honour was significantly less than the number of villis in which fees of the honour were located. Ault's analysis of the hundred roll evidence regarding views of frankpledge shows that in a number of instances, the men of neighbouring villis who lived within the honour attended the honour's view at one of these places.⁹¹ The hundred rolls record that the honour's view at Bicester attracted suitors from among the villeins of several neighbouring Wallingford

⁹⁰ These are plotted on map in Appendix 6.

⁹¹ Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 225-27.

fees, including Stratton, Caldecote and Rousham.⁹² The record of the view of frankpledge is not entirely clear from the hundred roll evidence, however. Ault was not able to establish the views attended by all tenants of the honour, though he argued that it was likely that the views recorded in the inquisition of 1300 were intended to cover all tenants of the honour whether they were resident in one of those twenty-three villis or not. The nature of the survival of the hundred rolls means that the only detailed information we have regarding fees of the honour relates to Oxfordshire. Ault pointed out that a number of Oxfordshire hundreds (Lewknor, Binfield, Pyrton, Langtree, and Ewelme) were appurtenant to the manor of Benson which was also held by Earl Edmund who therefore had the franchise of view of frankpledge for everyone in these hundreds anyway.⁹³ This is a possibility, but, as Ault himself suggests, those living within the honour may have had a separate view even within these hundreds, as views of the honour were held at Kingston Blount within Lewknor Hundred, and at Stoke within Langtree hundred, and at Chalgrove which was in the half-hundred of Ewelme. The hundred rolls give an impression of how the honour's jurisdiction operated, but it is necessary to look elsewhere for clarification of the administration of the view of frankpledge.

The survival of ministers' accounts for the end of Earl Edmund's lordship may help to provide a different perspective on the administration of the honour's administration of this franchise. Earl Edmund received a total of £17 3s 8d in the year 1296/7 from the villis of the honour of Wallingford for a 'fixed view' (*certus visus*).⁹⁴ This fixed view appears to have been similar to the tithing-penny, a payment made at the

⁹² Ibid., p. 225.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 227; *CIPM*, iii, p. 464.

⁹⁴ *Ministers' Accounts*, pp. 113-15.

view of frankpledge of one penny from every male person over twelve years of age.⁹⁵ The payments recorded from 105 villis within the honour of Wallingford demonstrate that the tithing-penny was indeed collected from those living in villis within the honour even when one of the honour's twenty-three views was not held there. In terms of jurisdiction, this shows that the lord of the honour does seem to have held the view of frankpledge throughout the honour and that its revenues were accounted for separately from those of the earl's private hundreds and from the honours of St Valery and Berkhamsted. The accounts reveal that by 1296/7, four bailiffs were charged with the taking of the view of frankpledge across the honour and accounted at the earl's central administration individually.⁹⁶

As well as the physical extent of jurisdiction, the accounts also demonstrate the financial value of the franchise of the view of frankpledge to the earls. The right to collect the tithing-penny brought Earl Edmund the considerably sum of £17 3s 8d. In addition to this, there survives a much larger account of the 'perquisites of the view' in which four bailiffs, Ralph de Mershe, Stephen le Wyte, Walter le Ferour and William de Batayle, accounted for what appear to be the profits of amercements made at the honour's view.⁹⁷ The total for all the views was reckoned at £34 10s 5d.⁹⁸ This, together with the fixed view or 'cert money' of £17 3s 8d comes to a total of £51 14s 1d being received from the view of frankpledge in one year. The total income Earl Edmund received from the honour of Wallingford in that year was £172 19s 1½d, meaning that nearly thirty percent of the income received from the honour in the year 1296/7 was derived from the

⁹⁵ Titow, 'Some Evidence', pp. 218-19; Cam, *The Hundred*, pp. 125, 186.

⁹⁶ *Ministers' Accounts*, pp. 118, 121, 123, 125.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 118-128.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

holding of the view of frankpledge. This franchise was therefore very profitable, and would have been of significant financial value to the earl of Cornwall irrespective of any political advantage it might have conferred on him.

The significance of this jurisdiction should not be underestimated. On a basic level, it would have made the peasantry aware that they lived within the earl of Cornwall's honour of Wallingford. The existence of tithings and the view of frankpledge in general was a significant link between the king and individual peasants in the villages of his kingdom, and evidence of the prodigious centralisation and great power the English monarchy had enjoyed since before the Conquest. Although peasants living within the honour of Wallingford would almost certainly have sworn the oath to the king at the view as did peasants living in royal hundreds, the fact that it was administered by the earls' men and that they paid their tithing-penny to the earl is likely to have been noticeable to them. In this sense, the importance of the view of frankpledge in bringing even the unfree peasantry into contact with royal government might also be seen to have applied to the relationship between the earl and all men, not just an elite of knightly tenants, living within the honour of Wallingford. The political texture of English society is still relatively unknown, but recent research has suggested great complexity and depth of political feeling during the barons' wars of the middle of the thirteenth century.⁹⁹ For magnates such as the earls of Cornwall, the political value of maintaining a direct link with every level of society nominally under their jurisdiction may have had a value other than its financial worth.

The significance of the view of frankpledge was also that it was the principal mechanism for the keeping of the king's peace. As Cam wrote, 'the jurisdiction of the

⁹⁹ Carpenter, 'Peasants in Politics', pp. 3-42.

thirteenth-century sheriff in the tourn corresponds to the work done by a nineteenth-century justice of the peace' or a modern county or district council.¹⁰⁰ They dealt with matters such as encroachments on public land, the removal of boundary marks, the division of watercourse, brewing or baking offences, regulation of weights and measures, and policing through the supervision of the hue and cry.¹⁰¹ In general, to hold the view as a royal franchise in some instances implied that the private lord simply received the profits of the view which was administered by a royal hundred-bailiff, while in other instances the franchise holder actually administered the articles of the view and was thus responsible for supervising all these parts of local government.¹⁰² It was apparently this latter type of view that the lords of Wallingford held.

The seriousness with which the administration of these local government functions beyond the financial profits they entailed was taken is demonstrated by a charter of Richard, earl of Cornwall in favour of Ogbourne Priory, the religious house founded at one of the honour's Wiltshire manors by Matilda of Wallingford in the early twelfth century. The charter, dated 1253, granted to the abbot and monks of Bec and all the men they had in the honour of Wallingford, quittance of suit at his court, and of all exactions at the view of frankpledge.¹⁰³ The text of the charter then goes on to stipulate one single exception; 'that the bailiff of our honour of Wallingford, every year, once a year, should have ingress to the court of the aforesaid abbot and monks at Ogbourne, and [hold the view of frankpledge for their men] in order that the king's peace might be well

¹⁰⁰ Cam, *The Hundred*, p. 124.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹⁰³ *Monasticon*, vi, p. 1017.

kept'.¹⁰⁴ The monks were also required to provide hospitality for the bailiff and his men. While relinquishing to the monks all claims to the profits of justice from their men, Earl Richard reserved the actual view to his own bailiff for what appear to be entirely reasons of power and prestige. Although he was willing to give up his claim to the profits of this franchise, he was not willing to renounce his right to administer the local affairs of the manor, which as was established above, amounted to control of local government.

It is true that the charter is concerned with maintaining the king's peace, but it is also remarkably specific about who should carry out the view; it was to be the earl's bailiff of his honour of Wallingford, who was to visit Ogbourne every year and be entertained by the monks there, presumably at their expense. The bailiff is not referred to as representing the king, but representing the Earl Richard, while he was specifically to have been the bailiff of the honour of Wallingford. All this seems to suggest a concern for maintaining the jurisdiction of the honour in the field of local government. This need not be seen as diminishing royal power, but by seeking to ensure that the king's peace was maintained by his men, Earl Richard was reinforcing his position in local society and his authority over all the men of the honour of Wallingford.

The opportunities for consolidation of power that the control of the view and its associated functions brought to the lord of Wallingford lead us to consider the instances where the lord of Wallingford's claim was contested. The local power and prestige that holding the view of frankpledge could give to a lord must have made it a sought-after privilege among the knightly class, sections of which in the thirteenth century were increasingly adopting the trappings of aristocracy and lordship, and attempting to carve

¹⁰⁴ Ibid; '*quod ballivus noster de Walingeford, singulis annis, semel anno, infra curiam predictorum abbatis et monachorum apud Okeburn ingressum habeat, et visum franciplegii hominum suorum ejusdem manerii, ad videndum, quod pax regia bene conservetur*'.

out areas of influence around their own patrimonies just as the greater aristocracy did on a larger scale. By the thirteenth century it was common for prominent members of the knightly class who held several manors to hold the view of frankpledge in at least one of their manors.¹⁰⁵ How did the honour of Wallingford's dominance of the view affect its knightly tenants?

In some cases, Wallingford tenants held manors outside the honour of Wallingford where they claimed the view of frankpledge; the fitzEllis family, a major Oxfordshire knightly family who held the Buckinghamshire manor of Oakley of the honour held the view of frankpledge in Worminghall, Oxfordshire.¹⁰⁶ Some knights claimed to hold the view of frankpledge even within the honour in apparent conflict with the claims of the lords of Wallingford. Alan son of Roald claimed to hold the view at Aston Rowant, despite it being a Wallingford manor which he held of Earl Edmund who claimed to hold the view 'throughout the honour'.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, the Dayrells also claimed the view in their manor of Hanworth in Middlesex, which they held of the honour of Wallingford.

Whereas there is no positive evidence of a dispute between the lords of Wallingford and their tenant, the lord of Aston Rowant, merely the record of an apparently conflicting claim, in the case of the Dayrells there was a dispute. Henry Dayrell claimed before the king's justices in 1293/4 that he held the view of frankpledge and its related jurisdiction for his tenants in Hanworth.¹⁰⁸ The record goes on to state that Henry did not claim the view for all his tenants 'but a few' which he then named as

¹⁰⁵ Coss, *Origins*, p. 160.

¹⁰⁶ *RH*, i, p. 25;

¹⁰⁷ JUST 1/705, m. 3d.

¹⁰⁸ *PQW*, p. 477.

Walter de Harpenden, Geoffrey Russel, Robert Bonfaunt, Roger Orger, John de Ethington, Richard de Welbe, Geoffrey de Northull, Roger Crok, Richard le Clerk, John le Battero, John atte Breche, Walter Bertram, and Roger le Mouner. The case was put against him that he did not in fact have the view as King Henry III had given it to Richard of Cornwall with the honour of Wallingford. The jury then said that at the time the honour of Wallingford was in the hands of the king, Henry's ancestors did hold the view of frankpledge for all their tenants in Hanworth every Michaelmas, but that when the honour was granted to Earl Richard, the earl's bailiffs attached all the tenants to attend the view of the honour of Wallingford at Uxbridge. The jury said that Henry's ancestors had held the view *a tempore quo non exstat memoria* and he was allowed to hold the view based on this. The Dayrells appear therefore to have lost their right to hold the view to their feudal lords, the earls of Cornwall in 1231. Earl Richard was clearly willing to extend his reach over the whole of his new honour, even at the expense of his new tenants.

The apparent conflict between Henry Dayrell and Earl Edmund was possibly resolved amicably; the fact that Henry only claimed to hold the view for some of his tenants is unexplained in the record but may indicate that a compromise had been reached. Evidence would suggest that the Dayrells were on good terms with Earl Edmund, having witnessed at least one of his charters.¹⁰⁹ The earl continued to collect revenues from the view of the men of Hanworth until his death, as the 1296/7 ministers' accounts and the inquisition of 1300 recorded, though it is unclear whether this excluded the view that Henry Dayrell had been allowed in 1193/4.¹¹⁰ It is also unclear as to

¹⁰⁹ *CChR 1257-1300*, p. 209. For discussion of this charter, see chapter 6.

¹¹⁰ *CIPM*, iii, p. 466.

whether the other instances of Wallingford tenants claiming to hold the view of frankpledge in the manors they held of the honour, such as Alan son of Roald mentioned above, or indeed Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln. Lacy held of the honour and claimed to hold a view of frankpledge at Uxbridge on the same occasion that the jury in the Henry Dayrell case described the honour's view at Uxbridge.¹¹¹ These apparent contradictions and competing claims to jurisdiction reflect a level of complexity in the administration of the view and its associate functions that is obscured by the limitations of the available evidence, but enough is known to conclude that the view of frankpledge was a franchise that was far-reaching in its potential for local influence. For this reason the jurisdiction it involved was highly prized by those wishing to have influence over the peasantry. The examples of knightly tenants claiming the franchise within the honour of Wallingford testify to its value, whether this was in terms of prestige, finance, political influence or all three. That the lord of the honour retained the view throughout the honour may well have been an important element in ensuring the honour's identity, not just as an aristocratic network in the way Stenton described, but also an area of crown jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction over criminals: the prison

The jurisdiction of the honour also operated with great effectiveness in the area of the pursuit, arrest, imprisonment and punishment of criminals. Since Anglo-Saxon times, English society had regarded certain actions as felonies; contraventions of the king's peace and breaches of the oath sworn by all men over the age of fourteen. This criminal jurisdiction was reserved to the crown, though responsibility for the administration of this

¹¹¹ *PQW*, p. 476.

type of jurisdiction within the fees of the honour of Wallingford appears to have lain with the honour's steward. Wallingford castle was the headquarters of the honour and the place from which the lord's bailiffs worked. It also housed more than one prison. A number of prisons are known to have existed there and Wallingford attracted contemporary notoriety for its gaol. Matthew Paris in his description of the defeat of King Stephen at Wilton in 1140 described the subsequent imprisonment of William Martel, Stephen's *dapifer*, by Brian fitzCount. It seems Matthew embellished the account of Robert of Torigni upon which he appears to have based this section, with the information that Brian had a special prison built for William Martel which was called *Cloere Brien*.¹¹² No other source for this information has been found and so it may be that Paris was using his own knowledge of the Wallingford of his own day, which is likely to have been very good, as Wallingford Priory was a cell of St Alban's, and Richard of Cornwall had links with the abbey. Matthew also, on a separate occasion, described a riot that broke out among scholars at Oxford directed against the papal legate who was staying there at the time.¹¹³ He stated that the king, on hearing of the incident, sent the Earl Warenne to Oxford, who arrested the rioting scholars, after which they were imprisoned at Wallingford.¹¹⁴ It is interesting they were imprisoned at Wallingford rather than Oxford, where the Oxfordshire county gaol was located. This may have been out of consideration for security; imprisoning the rioters at Oxford could well have led to the castle coming under attack from sympathisers of the rioters attempting to break them out

¹¹² Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii, p. 174. The section from Robert of Torigni's chronicle used by Paris for his account was probably, *Chroniclers of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, vol. 4: 'The Chronicle of Robert of Torigni, abbot of the monastery of St Michael-in-peril-of-the-sea', ed. R. Howlett (Rolls Series, 1889), p. 144.

¹¹³ Paris, *Chronica*, iii, pp. 481-484.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 484.

of prison. On the other hand, it may be that the number of people arrested was so great that an especially large prison was needed. The attention Paris gave to the building of *Cloere Brien* in 1140 suggesting the possibility of a famous prison there in the thirteenth century, hints that Wallingford may have been chosen as it was deemed particularly suited to the purpose it was put to in 1238, either in terms of size or reputation. When the king's jewels were stolen in 1305, those responsible were imprisoned at Wallingford alongside other prisons. Throughout the period it appears to have been a major prison.¹¹⁵

Apart from the few high profile cases just mentioned, Wallingford generally seems to have served as a prison for both the county of Berkshire and the honour of Wallingford. In 1228 Thomas de Muleton and Robert de Lexington were commissioned to deliver the gaol of Wallingford, not at Wallingford itself, but outside the honour entirely, at Reading, which was one of the main towns of Berkshire and an important ecclesiastical liberty as extensive as the honour of Wallingford.¹¹⁶ This was before the castle and honour had been given to Richard of Cornwall, when they were still in royal hands. Yet this state of affairs continued afterwards. There may have been some confusion as to what the future system would be as in November 1229, while staying at Wallingford, Henry III specifically ordered the constable of the castle by letters close, to continue to receive prisoners from the sheriff of Berkshire and to guard them as he had been accustomed before the castle was given to Richard.¹¹⁷ Thereafter, the sheriff of Berkshire appears to have used the prison at Wallingford as a number of royal writs

¹¹⁵ *CR 1302-1307*, pp. 258-9.

¹¹⁶ *CPR 1225-1232*, p. 223.

¹¹⁷ *CR 1227-1231*, p. 265.

ordering sheriffs of Berkshire to imprison wrongdoers at Wallingford over the ensuing decades make clear.¹¹⁸

Wallingford was very much a royal prison serving the county of Berkshire as well as being an important prison used by the king for more particular and high profile cases. It was also a gaol for the honour of Wallingford. Criminals arrested within the honour were imprisoned at Wallingford to await the arrival of royal justices in eyre or specially commissioned justices of gaol delivery. So, when some time before 1232, a man called Ralph killed someone in Botolph Claydon in the Vale of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, he was given by that vill to the bailiffs of Wallingford who imprisoned him in the castle there.¹¹⁹ The Buckinghamshire county gaol was at Aylesbury, only nine miles away from Botolph Claydon, and where criminals from Buckinghamshire were generally detained, yet because Botolph Claydon was within the honour, it was to Wallingford castle, twenty-three miles away in Berkshire, that Ralph was sent.

This was not an isolated case. The plea roll of the Berkshire eyre of 1284 contains a dedicated headed *Deliberat[i]o Gaiole Honor' Walingford ibidem*.¹²⁰ Of the first four entries below this heading, none of the cases related to Berkshire; two involved cases from Oxfordshire, one from Ogbourne in Wiltshire, and one from Uxbridge in Middlesex. So the justices in eyre, apparently at the special session of the Berkshire eyre held at Wallingford in 1284, heard cases of criminals arrested throughout the geographical extent of the honour, but who were all incarcerated at the honour's gaol. The jurisdiction of the gaol for the honour is made most clear by a royal order of 30 July 1237 ordering the sheriffs of London to hand over two prisoners then held at Newgate

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 526; *CR 1231-1234*, p. 9; *CR 1237-1242*, pp. 444, 448.

¹¹⁹ JUST 1/62, m. 4d.

¹²⁰ JUST 1/48, m. 47.

prison, William Horsnail and John son of Thomas, to the constable of Wallingford who was to keep them in the ‘prison of [the] castle until the arrival of the king’s justices in those parts’.¹²¹ The two prisoners to be transferred from Newgate to Wallingford castle, so the letter states, had been arrested at Iver in Buckinghamshire on suspicion of robbery. Newgate was London’s main gaol for felons, but also a place where criminals were sent from other prisons across southern England no doubt to stand trial at the king’s court at Westminster.¹²² Transferring prisoners away from Newgate must have been less common, but in this case explicable. Iver was a manor of the honour of Wallingford which lay on the road to London, close to the Middlesex border. It may be that the robbery of which they were suspected was causing a nuisance to those using the road to London and that they were arrested and taken to London. It seems that the prisoners were transferred to Wallingford castle and the keeping of Richard de Turri, the earl of Cornwall’s constable there, because they had been arrested at Iver which was within the honour’s jurisdiction. It is difficult to know what prompted this royal order, but it is likely that it was a result of Richard of Cornwall and his ministers asserting their right to the custody of prisoners.

The terminology used to describe the prison at Wallingford helps to shed light on its status. There was clearly a royal gaol at Wallingford even during the period in which the earls of Cornwall held it. Royal writs addressed to the sheriff of Berkshire of 1243 and 1245 refer to ‘the prison of the king at Wallingford’.¹²³ But in July 1246, a record on the close roll referred to a prisoner ‘arrested and detained in the prison of Richard, earl of

¹²¹ *CR 1234-1237*, pp. 477-8.

¹²² Pugh, ‘King’s Prisons’, p. 16.

¹²³ *CR 1242-1247*, pp. 103, 311.

Cornwall at Wallingford'.¹²⁴ There is thus some confusion as to whether there was more than one prison at Wallingford, each with separate jurisdictions, or whether one prison was used for different purposes. If one prison was used for both jurisdictions, the confusion that this overlap may have caused could explain the charter of Edward I giving the town gaol of Windsor (built in 1260) the official status of county gaol for Berkshire and finally separating the two jurisdictions.¹²⁵

The relationship between the earl of Cornwall and the royal gaol is hinted at in an entry on the close roll for 1254. On 24 July of that year, the king ordered the sheriff of Oxfordshire to transport three oaks to Wallingford to repair the 'gaol of the king of Wallingford'.¹²⁶ Significantly, the enrolment noted that this was issued *per comitem R. Cornubie*, and was during a time when the earl was regent. This writ makes clear that the maintenance of the king's gaol was paid for by the king rather than Earl Richard. It also shows that Richard recognised the gaol to be the king's and did not claim it as his own, or as part of a franchise, highlighting the reference to Richard of Cornwall's prison in the royal letters of July 1246 just mentioned. Richard appears to have been taking the opportunity to repair the prison at Wallingford while his brother's royal administration was in his hands. This record represents a more general but important aspect of the relationship between Richard of Cornwall, his franchisal jurisdiction, and royal government. The earl sought to maintain and promote royal power. His own power and authority in England was the result of the trust that existed between him and his brother to the point where in the business of government, Earl Richard acted as a second king.

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 411.

¹²⁵ *CR 1259-1261*, p. 125; *CChR 1257-1300*, p. 203; Pugh, 'King's Prisons', p. 5.

¹²⁶ *CR 1253-1254*, p. 89.

The Pursuit, Arrest and Punishment of Felons

Wallingford served as the prison for felons arrested within the honour, in place of the county gaol to which felons arrested by the sheriff would normally be sent. Related to the jurisdiction of the prison was responsibility for pursuing and arresting criminals; a responsibility that normally belonged to the sheriff.¹²⁷ As with other functions of the sheriff, Wallingford's steward and bailiffs fulfilled this role within the honour.

This area of jurisdiction was closely associated with the tithing groups and the view of frankpledge discussed above, but whereas the holder of the view might have expected to hand over felons to the sheriff or his men to be imprisoned by him, within the honour of Wallingford, it was the steward and bailiffs who received criminals from the men of the vill or arrested them themselves, though it is unclear whether this jurisdiction was well understood. There is ample evidence of the extensive jurisdiction of Wallingford's bailiffs.

In 1260, a case came before the Oxfordshire eyre, involving a man named Eustace le Peletarius of Wallingford who was suspected of killing Agnes, the wife of Walter le Teler at Goring, before fleeing. The vill of Goring did not pursue him, but he was afterwards arrested by the bailiffs of Wallingford and brought before Peter of Ashridge, steward of the earl of Cornwall, at the court of Wallingford and was convicted and hanged there.¹²⁸ Similarly, a few years later, the king's justices visiting Oxfordshire in 1285 heard a case involving a group of malefactors who came to the house of one Richard le Marmion in Mongewell a few miles away from Wallingford, and killed him

¹²⁷ Cam, *The Hundred*, pp. 67-74.

¹²⁸ PRO: JUST 1/701, m. 27d; Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre Roll of 1261', ii, no. 766.

before immediately running away. One of the wrong-doers, Thomas Lyrepyn was captured and taken before Fulk of Rycote, steward of the earl of Cornwall at the time (probably in the late 1260s), at the court of the earl at Stoke Basset where by the judgement of the full hundred at the view of frankpledge he was hanged.¹²⁹

Not only do these cases illustrate the role of the bailiffs of the honour in pursuing and arresting a murderer, but also that the steward was apparently able to execute these felons. Murder was one of the most serious offences against the king's peace and its punishment was normally reserved to the king's officials. Some lords are known to have had private gallows and the franchise of infangenethef allowing its holder to execute thieves caught in possession of stolen goods was highly prized.¹³⁰ No mention of such franchises can be found in relation to the privileges of the honour of Wallingford. Indeed the jurisdiction described here seems to be greater than hanging thieves caught red handed. Eustace le Peletarius and Thomas Lyrepyn were both arrested for murder rather than theft. In any case, it was clearly the bailiffs of the honour who arrested criminals in both these cases and then brought them before the steward. In the earlier case, this was at Wallingford, but in the latter case the record states that it was at Stoke Basset and 'before the full hundred at the view of frankpledge'.

These cases may have been exceptional. There is a great deal to suggest that the jurisdiction of the liberty of the honour in this area was the subject of confusion if not conflict. A case heard at the Buckinghamshire eyre of 1227 may be taken to hint at Wallingford honorial jurisdiction while also demonstrating a degree of uncertainty among contemporaries. A woman named Emma accidentally drowned at Iver, but the vill did not

¹²⁹ PRO: JUST 1/705, m. 5.

¹³⁰ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, i, p. 577.

present the matter to either the coroner or to the sheriff and so was amerced.¹³¹ A note was made that inquiry was to be made as to who was the bailiff of Wallingford at the time, which as it was observed above suggests that the vill might have presented the case to the bailiff. Yet if this was the case it is interesting that they should have been amerced by the eyre justices in any case, which would suggest some confusion. Not enough is known about this case to be certain, however.

A more detailed account of a case brought before the Oxfordshire eyre in 1260 highlights the potential for a clash between officers of different jurisdictions as well as providing further insight into the practice of arresting criminals within the honour of Wallingford. Ralph Daundely, the coroner of Oxfordshire, made a complaint against Peter of Ashridge, steward of Wallingford, over his conduct in a particular incident involving the pursuit of a thief.¹³² He complained that during the period in 1254 when Henry III was out of the country and royal government had been left in the hands of Richard, earl of Cornwall, the earl's servant, Peter of Ashridge, who was steward of the honour of Wallingford, took ten marks off him 'by force and at his own pleasure and against the crown and dignity of the king, and in breach of his peace.' This was part of a whole series of *querela* that were heard during this eyre and which related to complaints against royal and baronial officials. This particular case sheds much light on the arrest of criminals within the jurisdiction of the honour of Wallingford as the arguments between the parties came down to different interpretations of the correct procedure within the honour of Wallingford. The story as Ralph told it was that a thief having fled to the church of Chesterton in Oxfordshire, the lord of Chesterton called him to execute his

¹³¹ *Buckinghamshire Eyre 1227*, no. 517.

¹³² *Select Cases*, pp. 107-8.

office as coroner. Ralph then ordered that representatives of the nearest townships of the hundred be summoned to Chesterton, and told the lord of that township that since it was part of the honour of Wallingford, he was to see that representatives of the townships of the honour came. In their presence the thief abjured the realm. Ralph then claimed to the justices in 1260 that Peter of Ashridge subsequently ordered the sheriff of Oxfordshire to take Ralph and whatever he had in the world and to get twenty-four men to stand bail for him that he would appear before Peter at Wallingford. When he attended, Peter took from him the ten marks 'because he had executed his office within the boundaries of the honour of Wallingford'.

In response to this, Peter of Ashridge stated that he had ordered the sheriff to distrain Ralph because he had caused representatives both of the honour and the hundred to come to Chesterton without the bailiff of the honour and in breach of its privileges and that this was in disparagement to his lord and his lord's honour of Wallingford. He also stated that his actions were done by order of Earl Richard and not by Peter himself. Ralph argued that he did not act in prejudice of the earl of Cornwall or the honour of Wallingford as he came to Chesterton at the lord of Chesterton's bidding to execute his office there, and found the king's bailiffs and representatives of the townships of the hundred and the honour already present and did not summon them himself. He said that he asked the lord and free tenants of Chesterton, and the other men assembled if he could make the thief abjure the realm if bailiffs of the hundred and honour sufficient townships and free men were present, and they told him that he could.

No decision was recorded in this case but it provides immensely valuable evidence of the operation of the honour of Wallingford's jurisdiction over this area of

criminal justice and there are many points of interest in these accounts. It is notable that neither party in the case disputed that it was correct procedure for the coroner of Oxfordshire to have been summoned to execute his office. There was also no disagreement over the principle that representatives not just of the hundred but also of the vills of the honour should have been summoned. On this point it is interesting that the initiative seems to have been with the lord of Chesterton who is unnamed, but would have been Ralph of Chesterton, a knightly tenant of the honour who was descended from a Domesday tenant of Miles Crispin. It was Ralph of Chesterton who summoned the men of the honour and the hundred, and sent for the coroner, and when the latter arrived it was the coroner who consulted the lord of Chesterton and the other assembled men as to whether he could proceed. The impression given by the account is that Ralph of Chesterton was in charge of events, which helps to place the role of the lord of the manor in the context of law enforcement at the level of the county and honour.

Related to this, but also interesting in its own right, is the implication of the testimony of Peter of Ashridge that he and the earl of Cornwall felt they should have directed events rather than the coroner. The testimony must here be treated with some caution. It says nothing about the view Peter took with regard to the actions of Ralph of Chesterton, concentrating as it is to be expected purely on the wrongdoing of the coroner who was complaining about being wrongfully distrained. It is also not at all certain that Peter did consult the earl about his action on this case. All that can be said for the fact that he vouched his lord to warranty six years after the event is that Earl Richard was willing to support the actions of his steward. On the other hand, the timing of this incident may be significant. The king was out of the country and Earl Richard was in

control of royal government. It is possible that Peter was using this state of affairs to his advantage, perhaps cracking down on practices that he disapproved of. It was mentioned above that Earl Richard set about refurbishing the gaol at Wallingford during his regency. The statement that Peter of Ashridge ordered the sheriff of Oxfordshire to distrain the county's coroner is an intriguing formulation implying a very significant dominance of the steward of Wallingford over affairs relating to the honour. It cannot be said for certain whether such a thing could have occurred if the lord of Wallingford had not at the same time been regent of England.

This case raises the further possibility that Peter of Ashridge was claiming to be coroner for the honour. N. Denholm-Young has shown that on the Isle of Wight, the constable of Carisbrooke Castle acted as coroner on the island,¹³³ and Ashridge's complaint here may be that to summon the coroner was to infringe his own right to act in this role.

Both this case and the incident of the drowning at Iver recorded at the 1227 Buckinghamshire eyre do show that the honour's privileges were based on custom, and that those outside the honour appear to have deferred to those within it in knowledge of its customs and privileges. The issues at stake in the Daundely case appear to have been primarily internal, relating to the role of the steward in directing legal proceedings rather than the existence of the honour's privileges against the remit of the coroner and other officials. Yet the case also illustrates to a remarkable degree the operation of the honour's jurisdiction and the ways in which it was upheld by the combined assumptions of lord of the honour, the steward, the knightly tenants, free men and royal officials.

¹³³ Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration*, p. 107.

The earl's concern to assert these privileges is most clearly shown in 1260 when he seems to have gained exemption for the honour of Wallingford from the investigation into abuses of bailiffs established by the reforms of 1258/9. Letters close were sent in January 1260 by the king to his justices in the counties of Wiltshire, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Berkshire ordering them to adjourn complaints against the earl's bailiffs to the earl's own justices to be corrected under his jurisdiction.¹³⁴ Earl Richard therefore gained exemption for his entire honour of Wallingford from one of the most important concessions the king had made to those in local society who had stood to benefit from being able to report the abuses of seigneurial bailiffs to the king's justices. Not until the reign of Edward I when Richard had been succeeded by his son Edmund did complaints about Wallingford officials come to be heard by justices in eyre.

The Military Functions of the Honour

Lordships like the honour of Wallingford were in origin and in essence, military structures. They were networks of knights who owed military service.¹³⁵ The honour of Wallingford, however, seems to have been more than this. As in other areas, there is a suggestion in the evidence that the honour had jurisdiction over the more public aspects of military service and had responsibility for the military organisation of all men within the honour, and not just its knights.

The only extant evidence that provides us with any information regarding military organisation within the honour of Wallingford is a letter sent to the constable of the castle

¹³⁴ *CR 1259-1261*, p. 26.

¹³⁵ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 1-40.

of Wallingford dated at Canterbury on 6 September 1264.¹³⁶ After the battle of Lewes, Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester had taken control of royal government and was at Canterbury where he was negotiating with King Louis IX of France. The earl faced the threat of an invasion organised by Queen Eleanor, Peter of Savoy and other supporters of Henry III who were across the channel in France.¹³⁷ During the summer of 1264 therefore, Earl Simon went to great efforts to organise England for defence, and organised a national levy, summoning all men to defend the coast.¹³⁸ The letter to the constable of Wallingford of September 1264 relates to this levy. This letter is significant because it treats the honour of Wallingford as one of the military units on which the national levy was based. It was referred to as the ‘community of the honour’ of the castle of Wallingford and the constable was ordered to ensure that the men recently supplied by the honour for the defence of the kingdom should remain even if they had completed their service, and that the constable was to supply them with necessary expenses. From this letter it would seem that the ‘community’ of the honour of Wallingford was considered to be a unit from which it was appropriate to raise troops for the defence of the country, on a similar basis to the way in which the armed forces of counties were organised.

Was this a unique event? To address the honour of Wallingford as a unit in the way described could have been an innovation of the Montfortian regime. When Henry III made provision for the military organisation of the whole realm in 1242, letters to the sheriffs of thirty-six counties ‘concerning the keeping of the peace’ were sent out, but there is no record of any similar letter being sent to the honour of Wallingford. This could suggest that in 1242, the military organisation of the free men of the honour of

¹³⁶ *CR 1261-1264*, p. 406.

¹³⁷ Powicke, *Henry III*, ii, p. 473.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 475.

Wallingford was undertaken by the sheriffs of the counties where the honour's manors lay. On the other hand, there are two reasons to suspect that this was not the case and that the letter sent on 6 September 1264 represents a more established situation.

The first consideration is that given what has been described above about the extensive jurisdiction of the honour, and the way the honour performed the tasks normally given to the sheriff, it would seem to be plausible that the sheriff's military functions would be carried out by the honour as well. The second consideration, which is related to this, is that earlier records might not survive precisely because the honour of Wallingford administered this area. In 1242, Richard of Cornwall may have issued similar letters concerning the keeping of the peace in his own lands which would explain why no separate letter was issued then. In the summer of 1264, Wallingford castle was out of Earl Richard's hands. His son Henry of Almain and the Lord Edward having been imprisoned there after the battle of Lewes in March 1264,¹³⁹ and a Montfortian garrison was apparently holding the castle until after the battle of Evesham when they were pardoned by the king.¹⁴⁰ The record of a letter issued to the honour in this matter could therefore be attributed to the fact that the unusual circumstances of Earl Simon's period of rule allow us a window into the military administration of the honour under the earl of Cornwall.

Return of writs and the relationship with central government

In the final part of this investigation into the jurisdiction of the honour, the position of the honour in relation to royal government as a whole through the royal chancery is

¹³⁹ Powicke, *Henry III*, p. 476.

¹⁴⁰ *CPR 1258-1266*, p. 528.

examined. The foregoing analysis has shown that in a number of different spheres of activity, the jurisdiction of the liberty of the honour was akin to that of the sheriff of a county. This situation is clear in the royal records before the honour was granted to Earl Richard. From the reign of Henry II, the honour was often treated more like a county than just a private lordship. Its steward or keeper was frequently referred to in documents as though he were a sheriff. The diplomatic forms employed by the royal chancery place the honour of Wallingford outside county jurisdiction. Letters were addressed to the bailiffs or steward of the honour of Wallingford ordering him to carry out functions that were normally those of the sheriff. For instance, a writ was sent to the keeper of the honour of Wallingford on 5 February 1222 ordering him to let William archdeacon of London have seisin of the lands of Robert of Chesterton, a Wallingford tenant, together with custody of Robert's son and heir, after William made a fine of 100 marks for the wardship.¹⁴¹ The following year, the keeper of the honour of Wallingford was ordered to let Laurencia Basset and her husband Ralph of Weedon have seisin of Laurencia's inheritance from her father, Thurstan Basset having first accepted security of 40 marks they had offered.¹⁴² The equivalence of the keeper of the honour and a sheriff is highlighted by entries on the fine rolls such as that relating to the grant by the king to William Brewer of the custody of the nephew of Walter Crook who himself had entered a religious order.¹⁴³ The sheriff of Berkshire, the sheriff of Wiltshire and the keeper of the honour of Wallingford were all noted on the roll to have received orders to let William Brewer have seisin of Walter's lands. The employment of the formula, 'To the keeper of the honour of Wallingford' was unusual in the context of the fine rolls. Most orders of

¹⁴¹ *CFR 1221-1222*, no. 97.

¹⁴² *CFR 1222-1223*, no. 72.

¹⁴³ *CFR 1219-1220*, nos. 49-50.

this kind were sent to sheriffs rather than to bailiffs of an honour. Its administration was much more independent than many other lands which must have been administered by sheriffs. That the sheriff was excluded from the honour is suggested by the fact that the chancery issued routine writs directly to the keeper of the honour.

Despite the clauses in the assize of Clarendon emphatically stating that the sheriff did have jurisdiction ‘even in the honour of Wallingford’, in everyday matters, sheriffs appear not to have been permitted to enter or make distrains within the honour. The way in which the powers given to the sheriff by the assize worked in practice by the thirteenth century was only through the use of a royal writ with a clause, *non omittat*, which allowed the sheriff entry into a liberty to make distrain, but such writs were not used in the first instance; generally, the responsibilities that were elsewhere those of the sheriff were, within the honour, in the hands of the lord’s bailiffs.¹⁴⁴ Even after the honour had been transferred to Richard of Cornwall, some writs continued to be issued to the bailiffs of the honour. In 1240 the king informed the bailiffs of the honour that the king had given Hugh de Druval respite of knighthood until the following Easter, despite the fact that Earl Richard was Hugh’s lord.¹⁴⁵ This is evidence of the comprehensiveness of the honour’s jurisdiction. The bailiffs were the earl of Cornwall’s bailiffs, and it was through the earl’s bailiffs that royal orders in the honour were executed.

Both the extent and the implications of the sheriff’s exclusion are perceptible in the surviving account of one of the cases in the dispute between Ralph of Chesterton and William of Sulham before the Oxfordshire eyre of 1247, mentioned above. The two cousins sued and counter-sued one another in cases heard at the same eyre. In one

¹⁴⁴ Clanchy, ‘Introduction’, *Berkshire Eyre 1248*, p. xlvii.

¹⁴⁵ *CR 1237-1242*, p. 343.

instance, Ralph of Chesterton brought an action of novel disseisin against William of Sulham over common pasture in Britwell Salome in Oxfordshire, but, so the record states, ‘William did not come nor was he attached because he holds within the liberty of Wallingford.’¹⁴⁶ It did not benefit William in the long run, however, as the jury eventually found in favour of Ralph, but this nevertheless clearly demonstrates the inability of the sheriff to attach a tenant of the honour to attend court.

Another instance of the effect of the honour’s jurisdiction in excluding the sheriff is a memorandum entered in the close roll for 1273, noting a complaint of the sheriff of Oxfordshire that ‘the steward of the liberty of Wallingford does not make any men of his bailiwick come at the king’s command to the county [court] for the exaction of a writ *utrum odio*, and has thus usurped such inquisition to himself’.¹⁴⁷ This is the clearest example of tension between the royal sheriff and the honour’s steward, and marks an important level of immunity being extended to the men of the honour. On the other hand, many of the honour’s knightly tenants were also active members of the county elite, and did attend meetings of the county court and served as sheriffs. The exclusion of the sheriff in this case does not mean that the honour was a self-contained unit sealed off from Oxfordshire, merely that men were not required to attend the county court for business that related to land within the honour.

The exclusion of the sheriff in the way that has been described amounted to the franchise of ‘return of writs’ which was another of the high franchises identified by Pollock and Maitland.¹⁴⁸ Michael Clanchy has shown, however, that this phrase

¹⁴⁶ JUST 1/699, m. 16.

¹⁴⁷ CR 1272-1279, p. 46.

¹⁴⁸ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, i, pp. 582-4.

developed in the course of the thirteenth century and was not common before 1250.¹⁴⁹ It was only after the hundred roll inquiry of Edward I in 1274 and the subsequent *quo warranto* proceedings that references to the franchise of ‘return of writs’ became common as a result of the growing ambition of royal government and the defence of existing privileges by their holders.¹⁵⁰ The case of the honour of Wallingford is different from many of those discussed by Clanchy. While old families such as the Warennes who traced their lands and privileges back to the Conquest, and great abbey churches such as Ely and Bury St Edmunds who often traced their liberties back before the Conquest, might have been defending old privileges with new legal formulations, the honour of Wallingford was for a long time held by the king who could have placed it under the jurisdiction of the sheriff with no powerful opposition. The king’s conception of the honour’s privileges must therefore have been different from those of others if Clanchy’s argument is correct. Indeed, Clanchy provides the answer to this in drawing attention to the fact that after 1306 the king put on record in chancery, wardrobe and exchequer that no further concessions of return of writs would be made *except to his family*.¹⁵¹ This perhaps explains why the honour under Henry III’s close relatives, the earls of Cornwall was able to exclude the sheriff. Thus whereas in many cases of great privilege, the origins of ‘return of writs’ may indeed have been as Clanchy states, ‘one detail of a political settlement reflecting the relative power of sheriff and magnates in each county’ rather than ‘a franchise granted by the crown’, in the case of Wallingford, the ability to exclude the sheriff doubtless owed more to the latter. In other words, the honour’s jurisdiction more accurately deserves to be called a royal franchise than many other less

¹⁴⁹ Clanchy, ‘Return of Writs’, pp. 62-3.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 78.

extensive jurisdictions. This could apply to the whole range of jurisdictional privileges the honour enjoyed, which were so far-reaching precisely because they were exercised with the full cooperation and encouragement of the king.¹⁵²

The preceding analysis has dealt with the relationship between the honour of Wallingford and the crown, which by extension also meant what could be termed the ‘public’ jurisdiction of the honour. The honour’s privileges often amounted to royal jurisdiction within a given area. Significantly it was royal jurisdiction administered to varying degrees by agents of the earls rather than their own jurisdiction. The honour was an administrative liberty and its jurisdiction posed no political threat to the king. On the contrary, the king’s power in the honour could well have been greater as a result of it being administered directly by his brother or cousin, than if it was administered by the formal royal bureaucracy. To see power in this period as negotiated through many relationships and consisting of multiple nodal points as Rees Davies, Keith Stringer and others have argued was the case, is not to imply that the king’s power was any less. Both Henry III and Edward I appear to have recognised and encouraged the honour’s jurisdiction, which it has been shown complemented royal power while at the same time conferring status and financial profit on its lord.

¹⁵² Such a view would be congruent with the presentation of Henry III’s personal rule put forward in Carpenter, ‘King, Magnates and Society’, pp. 39-70.

4.2 THE INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE HONOUR

While the jurisdiction that arose from the honour's privileged position in respect of royal government gave it a 'public' jurisdiction touching all people living within its boundaries, the administration of the honour's landed resources and its tenants primarily affected those who held of the honour by knight service. It is this aspect of the honour with which Stenton was concerned when he wrote of *The First Century of English Feudalism*, and which he described as declining as a result of the Angevin legal reforms of the later twelfth century and the growth of royal power. The view of the honour's decline as a result of the new legal procedures and the access to the royal courts these gave to tenants of lords has been further developed by Milsom and Palmer.¹⁵³ The consequences of the decline of honorial ties have been considered central to the social and political changes of the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries that some have argued saw the rise of the gentry and the growing tendency for magnates to seek to exert power through influencing local elites in a similar way to the magnates of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁵⁴ Doubt has been cast on the chronology of honorial decline from different directions. On the one hand, many historians, most notably John Hudson and Susan Reynolds have argued that the kind of independent, almost 'sovereign' jurisdiction of a feudal lord over his honour outlined by Milsom, never existed, but rather that honour courts had always been integrated into broader processes of royal justice, and that tenants of lords were able to appeal to royal justice before Henry II's reign.¹⁵⁵ On the other hand, David Carpenter has

¹⁵³ Detailed summaries of their views are given in Brand, 'Origins of English Land Law', pp. 203-225.

¹⁵⁴ Coss, *Origins*, ch. 2; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 27-64; Crouch, Carpenter, Coss, 'Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 165-189; Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, p. 276.

¹⁵⁵ Hudson, *Land, Law and Lordship*, pp. 275-281; Hudson, *Formation*, p. 47; Brand, 'The Origins of English Land Law', pp. 219-220; Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 374-386.

argued that the importance of the honour should not be overlooked in the thirteenth century, and that there is strong evidence of the continued significance of honours well into the thirteenth century.¹⁵⁶ The honour of Wallingford provides evidence of an active honorial administration throughout the thirteenth century.

4.2.1 Demesne

Wallingford was unusual among lordships in containing little or no demesne land for much of its history. For nearly eighty years before 1231, the lord of Wallingford was the king. This may have had significant consequences for the way in which the honour was managed. It is striking that there was only one demesne manor, Watlington in Oxfordshire, when Richard, earl of Cornwall, received the honour in 1231, and this had not been considered part of the honour in the twelfth century.¹⁵⁷ It appears that once the honour escheated to the crown before 1154, its individual demesne manors were used as a source of land for royal patronage, and were steadily depleted. Brian fitzCount's demesne manors of Iver in Buckinghamshire and Aston Rowant in Oxfordshire were granted to Riulf de Saisson, probably by Henry Plantagenet after Brian's death, while Chalgrove was probably at the same time granted to the Boterel family.¹⁵⁸ These manors had been taken back into royal hands during the late 1160s as a result of their holders' deaths without heirs.¹⁵⁹ By 1173, Alan fitzAmfred had been granted Aston Rowant,

¹⁵⁶ Carpenter, 'Second Century', pp. 30-71.

¹⁵⁷ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', p. 305.

¹⁵⁸ *Book of Fees*, pp. 116-117.

¹⁵⁹ *Pipe Roll 15 Henry II*, p. 173.

worth £30 a year, and Gilbert de Ver received Iver, worth £40 a year.¹⁶⁰ Chalgrove seems to have been alienated by John between 1189 and 1194 when the honour was briefly in his hands; by 1212, Chalgrove was divided between Thomas Keret who had £35 worth and accounted at the exchequer for another portion worth £20 a year, and Hugh de Malauney.¹⁶¹

The honour became by the thirteenth century two things: an area of royal jurisdiction, as we have seen, and a network of tenants holding by knight-service and doing suit at the honour's court. Kings did not require the honour's demesne manors as they had other sources of revenue, including a number of important royal manors within the area of the honour, including Benson in Oxfordshire and Brill in Buckinghamshire. When Earl Richard took over the lordship of the honour, he too possessed a number of other demesne manors outside the honour of Wallingford. So, while demesne manors formed an important economic resource within many of the baronial estates that developed out of the Norman Conquest, and later became the basis of the landed wealth of the later medieval upper nobility, the honour of Wallingford held little landed value for its lord.

Although the economic value of the honour to its lord was primarily that of jurisdictional profits, the internal administration of the earls of Cornwall did deal with the direct exploitation of landed resources to a small extent. The manor of Watlington in southern Oxfordshire had been held by Robert d'Oilly in 1086, but had not become part of Brian fitzCount's honour. It was granted to Richard in 1231 along with the castle and

¹⁶⁰ *Pipe Roll 19 Henry II*, p. 77. It returned to the king's hands on Alan's death before 1187: *Pipe Roll 33 Henry II*, p. 21; but was subsequently granted to his nephew, Alan son of Roland fitzAmfred: *Chancellor's Roll 8 Richard I*, p. 161.

¹⁶¹ *Book of Fees*, p. 117.

honour of Wallingford, which together were to be held for the service of three knights.¹⁶² In 1300, Watlington was said to have been held in chief for one knight's fee.¹⁶³ The manor itself, which included a mill and a park, brought Earl Edmund an income of £66 19d in the year 1296/7, much of it from the profits of agriculture.¹⁶⁴

The manor of Watlington was supplemented by other demesne property when the honour became the core of a new bailiwick of Wallingford within the earldom of Cornwall. By the time the earldom escheated to the crown, this bailiwick, administered from Wallingford castle included the royal manors of Watlington, Henley-upon-Thames, Benson, Whitchurch, in Oxfordshire, Hambleden in Buckinghamshire, and of course, the royal borough of Wallingford, all of which were located within the same area as the manors of the honour of Wallingford.¹⁶⁵ The royal borough of Chichester was also administered as part of this bailiwick, presumably because it was a greater distance from any of the earldom's other estates. King Henry III's provision of these royal lands provided the honour with the demesne element that it lacked as a result of alienation under his predecessors. From these other demesne manors, the earls of Cornwall reaped all the financial rewards that lords usually expected from their demesne manors; profits of agricultural exploitation, fixed farms, rents from free tenants, and the profits of mills, parks and manorial courts.

The internal administration of the honour was therefore concerned in part with the direct management of economic resources, which formed an important source of income. This was not, however, the honour's principal importance, nor even part of its identity in

¹⁶² *CChR 1226-1257*, p. 139.

¹⁶³ *CIPM*, iii, p. 464.

¹⁶⁴ *Ministers' Accounts*, pp. 84-6.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 84-135.

the eyes of the earls or his tenants. Far more important were royal rights, discussed above, and the community of military tenants, to whom attention will now be turned.

4.2.2 The Honour Court

At the centre of Stenton's description of the Norman feudal honour was the court.¹⁶⁶ Like the royal court, this was the place where the government of the honour was carried out; where the lord took counsel from his men, where he made his announcements, where he heard disputes and did justice. Indeed, Stenton saw the court of an honour as the embodiment of the honorial community, a point recently developed by Crouch.¹⁶⁷ The community of the honour will be examined in depth in chapter 6, but in this section, the evidence for the procedures of the court and its jurisdiction will be explored.

Unfortunately no court rolls or other similar records of the court of Wallingford have survived from the period. It is nevertheless clear from other evidence that the court of the honour of Wallingford did exist. The inquisitors in 1300 found that the court brought its lord an income of £8 a year, which is similar to the £8 6s 6d collected from tenants of the honour owing suit of court in 1296/7.¹⁶⁸ There is much evidence that tenants were required to do suit at the court. Ault analysed the hundred roll entries for the tenants of the honour in Oxfordshire and found that of the thirty-four tenants by knight service holding of the honour in that county, twenty-six were stated to have been required to do suit at the court.¹⁶⁹ This, together with less systematic evidence of tenants

¹⁶⁶ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 41, 50.

¹⁶⁷ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 163-177.

¹⁶⁸ *CIPM*, iii, p. 467; *Minister's Accounts*, pp. 115-16.

¹⁶⁹ Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 216-222.

doing suit in other counties, led Ault to conclude that the court of Wallingford drew suitors from all seven counties where the honour's fees lay.¹⁷⁰

When Henry Dayrel, who held the manor of Hanworth in Middlesex of the honour, died in 1303, his wife held a portion of her husband's manor 'by the service of a quarter of a knight's fee and by doing suit at the king's court of Wallingford from month to month'.¹⁷¹ Indeed, the surviving references to tenants doing suit at the court of Wallingford in the hundred rolls also state that they were to do this every month.¹⁷² From this, it may be deduced that the court of Wallingford met once a month. Without records of the sessions of the court, it is not possible to say for certain whether all suitors attended the court every month and the rate of attendance is unknowable. It is possible that there were one or two special meetings of the court each year as there were elsewhere such as the Abbot of Ramsey's 'Great Courts' held on the Tuesday after Easter and the Tuesday after Michaelmas, but we have no evidence of such meetings for Wallingford.

Attendance at private courts was a controversial issue in the 1240s and was dealt with in the 1259 Provisions of Westminster.¹⁷³ These were the result of discontent with the attendance at private courts, many suitors arguing that they should attend only a few sessions in a year, or when the court was specially afforced. One case heard at the Oxfordshire eyre of 1247 shows that Richard, earl of Cornwall was willing to enforce suit of court. Henry of Lewknor complained that the earl had distrained him to do suit at the latter's court for three acres of meadow in Adwell he had gained by an agreement with William of Sulham, who was lord of the manor of Britwell Salome (Sullham) four miles

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., pp. 223-4.

¹⁷¹ *CR 1302-1307*, p. 21.

¹⁷² Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 216-222.

¹⁷³ Carpenter, 'Second Century', pp. 41-3.

away which he held of the honour of Wallingford.¹⁷⁴ The enforcement by magnates of suit at courts to which they were not required by terms of enfeoffment to do was addressed by the reforms of 1259 and was evidently an important issue for lords such as Richard of Cornwall as indeed for the lesser men who were required to do suit.¹⁷⁵ In this case, the matter in question appears to have been related to the terms on which William had granted the meadow to Henry, though it does show that Earl Richard did distrain this tenant to do suit at his court.

Civil Jurisdiction of Court

The court of Wallingford had an active civil jurisdiction throughout the thirteenth century. Scattered references in royal records suggest that the court of Wallingford was an active venue for tenants of the honour to settle disputes, though the lack of any more detailed evidence for this precludes systematic analysis. In July 1231, King Henry III ordered the keeper of the honour to hear a dispute between a certain William de Porta and Richard de Argentan, an important knight of the royal household, over a virgate of land in the Wallingford manor of Shabbington, at the next court of the honour which was to be held on a Tuesday in a month's time.¹⁷⁶ This order was issued the month before the charter granting the honour to Richard of Cornwall to hold in fee, which was dated 10 August 1231.¹⁷⁷ Although the castle and honour had been committed to Richard in November 1229 during pleasure, the honour was still in some sense in royal hands, which might explain why a royal writ was ordering a case to be heard in the court.

¹⁷⁴ PRO: JUST 1/699, m. 16.

¹⁷⁵ Carpenter, 'Second Century', pp. 41-3.

¹⁷⁶ CR 1227-1231, p. 515.

¹⁷⁷ CChR 1226-1257, p. 139.

There is little evidence of the court of the honour still being active under the earls of Cornwall, though there is enough to suggest that it was indeed still in operation. The similarities between the honours of Wallingford and Berkhamsted make it relevant to briefly discuss the evidence for the jurisdiction of the latter before examining that of Wallingford. The earls' honour court of Berkhamsted was active in 1262, when the plea roll of the Buckinghamshire eyre of that year recorded that John of Wedon had sued the abbot of Missenden for service due from a watermill and half a virgate in Amersham, Buckinghamshire. He did this, the record states, 'in the court of the lord king of Germany of Berkhamsted'.¹⁷⁸ The case reached the eyre because the abbot claimed to have done all the required service and therefore put himself on the grand assize. The court of Berkhamsted was thus still a place where tenants of that honour went to obtain justice in disputes over land and services. In 1286, the scribe noted on the eyre roll that another claim against the abbot of Missenden, this time by William de Turvill, was heard at the eyre 'because Edmund, the king's brother, the chief lord of this fee, has remitted his court to the king'.¹⁷⁹ The fee in question was three-quarters of a messuage, eight acres of wood, two carucates and two-and-a-half virgates of land near Wendover and Chalfont, which cannot be identified but which is likely also to have been in either the honour of Berkhamsted. Another case recorded on the same roll brought by William de Turville against the prior of Merton was also remitted to the king in the same way.¹⁸⁰ On the one hand this shows that the case was to be heard by the king's justices rather than the earl's, suggesting a reduced importance of the honour court, but on the other hand it could suggest the existence of a functioning jurisdiction from which the case had been

¹⁷⁸ PRO: JUST 1/57, m. 8.

¹⁷⁹ *Buckinghamshire Eyre 1286*, no. 153.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 269.

remitted to the eyre for specific reasons. The earls of Cornwall appear to have held active courts in their honour of Berkhamsted. Given the close relationship between the honours of Berkhamsted and Wallingford, it is possible that the jurisdiction of the one was similar to the other.¹⁸¹

The 1286 eyre roll also contains evidence of the working jurisdiction of the court of the honour of Wallingford in the record of a dispute between Gervase le Pestur of Wycombe in Buckinghamshire and three defendants whom he accused of unjustly disseising him of his free holding of two-thirds of a messuage in Wycombe.¹⁸² Gervase brought a writ of novel disseisin against Richard atte More and his wife Agnes, Adam de la More and his wife Maud, and Robert le Baillyf of Wycombe claiming that they had disseised him of his property. The responses of the defendants reveal that the crux of the dispute arose out of the jurisdiction of the court of Wallingford. Adam and Maud were the tenants of Richard and Agnes, who testified that they had done no injury or disseisin because Agnes had ‘brought a writ of right against Gervase in the court of the earl of Cornwall at Wallingford’ and had recovered her seisin of the land by judgement of that court. Gervase apparently responded to this argument by flatly denying that this had happened and stating that Agnes had never claimed these tenements in the court of Wallingford, ‘nor were they ever taken into the hand of that court’s lord, nor was a view made of them, nor any other law-suit taken between them upon [which] any judgement could be made in that court and put into execution.’ The jury did not accept Gervase’s view and said that Agnes had indeed recovered seisin by award of the court of the earl of

¹⁸¹ Wallingford and Berkhamsted were both honours centred on castles, with manors located in the same areas of Buckinghamshire, and with similar privileges. In the thirteenth century were both held by Richard of Cornwall. Also, see above, p. 136.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, no. 334.

Cornwall at Wallingford and that Gervase had not been unjustly diseised. Gervase was amerced for a false claim.

The case made by Gervase seems odd as the jury appear to have been quite clear that Agnes atte More had indeed gained seisin at the Wallingford court. He may have hoped to exploit confusion caused by the honour court's jurisdiction, or he may have been genuinely ignorant of the award. If the latter, Agnes's decision to take her case to Wallingford, some distance from Wycombe, may have been deliberate, so as to ensure Gervase's ignorance, though this is highly unlikely. In any case, the decision of the Wallingford court was upheld by the royal justices in eyre. This dispute appears to present us with an account of the operation of the Wallingford honour court in deciding a question of land tenure at Wycombe from the outside perspective of the injured party. Robert le Baillyf may actually have been a bailiff of the honour who carried out the decision of the Wallingford court and ensured that Agnes and her husband received the property. This case is important evidence of the vitality of the Wallingford honourial court's civil jurisdiction.

There is one further example of the court's continued vigour a decade later. A royal letter of 7 March 1297 was issued to 'the bailiffs of Edmund, earl of Cornwall of the honour of Wallingford' not to put Roald son of Alan in default for not appearing at the meeting of the court of the honour of Wallingford on the Tuesday before St Peter in Cathedra, as he was in the king's service that day.¹⁸³ The letter reveals that he was supposed to have attended in suit without the king's writ between himself and Petronilla de Scaccario concerning the latter's cattle unjustly taken and detained. This too is important evidence of the operation of the honour court of Wallingford at the end of the

¹⁸³ *CR 1296-1302*, p. 55.

thirteenth century, and is further evidence of the routine operation of a civil court where disputes were settled.

Both the case involving Gervase le Pestur and that involving Roald son of Alan were over relatively minor issues. The latter case involved members of the knightly class and which may have been a complaint by Petronilla de Scaccario against the honour's bailiffs. The Wycombe case seems to have involved lower status free-holders, suggested by the fact that the individuals involved cannot be identified. These two cases represent different kinds of business involving different kinds of people being dealt with by the honour court. Each example also comes from different parts of the honour; one from Wycombe in Buckinghamshire which sometimes seems semi-detached from the honour as it was held by the powerful Basset family during Henry III's reign, and the other from Oxfordshire where Roald son of Alan held the manor of Aston Rowant at the edge of the Chilterns. It is not clear why so much of the evidence for the activity of the Wallingford honour court is so late, most of the cases above dating from the 1280s and 1290s. This may be taken to indicate the breaking down of the system and that more cases which earlier had been dealt with at the honour court were coming to the royal courts.

The honour court was active but was not the exclusive venue for the resolution of disputes by tenants of the honour.¹⁸⁴ Hudson's description of honorial courts existing alongside royal courts as an integrated part of the English justice system is borne out by the Wallingford evidence. The two branches of the fitzAmaury family, to give one example, played out their disputes before the general eyre in 1247.¹⁸⁵ The cases heard involved land at Chesterton and common pasture at Britwell Salome, both within the

¹⁸⁴ Hudson, *Formation*, p. 47.

¹⁸⁵ PRO: JUST 1/699, mm. 8, 16, 22; also see above.

honour of Wallingford, and were between William of Sulham and Ralph of Chesterton, both descendants of one of Miles Crispin's Domesday tenants. This is therefore the kind of dispute that might be expected to have been dealt with in the court of the honour. The surviving record does not state whether action had earlier been taken in that court, which may have been the case, but it is impossible to tell. Nevertheless, the evidence reviewed here does seem to suggest that the court of the honour could still be a place where tenants of the honour went for justice at the end of the thirteenth century.

4.2.3 Steward and Bailiffs of the Honour

The internal jurisdiction described in this chapter was administered by the steward and bailiffs of the honour. Stewards were commonly employed by lords to administer great estates. They were responsible for collecting payments due to the lord, for presiding over the meetings of the honorial court when the lord was absent, and for enforcing the decisions of the lord and the court.¹⁸⁶ This role in the honour of Wallingford was especially prominent, partly because, being held by kings and their close family, the routine government of the honour was placed fully in the hands of the steward. Furthermore, the highly privileged position of the honour that gave it royal jurisdiction in a number of areas further served to place the steward in a prominent position; it was the steward who took the role of the sheriff within the honour. During the period when the honour was held by the crown, there are references to a 'keeper' of the honour who

¹⁸⁶ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 77-9.

appears to have performed a role similar to that of steward, though on occasions the keeper was a very high-status individual such as Richard of Cornwall himself in 1229.¹⁸⁷

Information concerning the identity of different stewards is more plentiful than detail about their precise functions within the honour. During the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries when the honour was in royal hands, the administration was headed by the leading tenant family of the honour, the Bassets of Bicester. Thomas Basset accounted for the honour at the exchequer at Michaelmas 1172. He was succeeded in the office by his son, Gilbert Basset around the year 1179.¹⁸⁸ Gilbert appears to have continued in the role when the honour was granted to John, count of Poitou; there is some evidence that Gilbert rebelled with John against King Richard in 1193, and Gilbert witnessed a charter datable to the mid-1190s as steward of the honour.¹⁸⁹ Once the honour was confiscated its administrative personnel become more difficult to identify. William de Ste Mère Eglise, one of two escheators appointed to administer the rebels' lands, accounted for the honour in the latter part of Richard's reign. With alienation of the remaining demesne and other escheated lands, the honour becomes difficult to trace in the pipe rolls, and more scattered references in chancery and exchequer rolls must be relied upon.

It is striking that among identifiable stewards of the honour throughout the thirteenth century, there were knightly tenants of the honour. Fulk of Rycote was steward during the 1260s or early 1270s.¹⁹⁰ Robert Malet held the office under Edmund, earl of

¹⁸⁷ *CR 1227-1231*, p. 258.

¹⁸⁸ Hedges, *History of Wallingford*, i, p. 285.

¹⁸⁹ *Goring Charters*, no. 2; Hedges, *History of Wallingford*, p. 289, citing Dodsworth MS. vol. xlvii, f70.

¹⁹⁰ PRO: JUST 1/705, mm. 1d, 3d; *Sandford*, no. 27.

Cornwall,¹⁹¹ as did Walter of Aylesbury who was steward at the time of Edmund's death, and acted as one of the earl's executors and continued in the stewardship afterwards.¹⁹² Walter gained land within the honour and became a tenant, though he appears not to have been before his appointment.¹⁹³ On the other hand, many were not tenants. Peter of Ashridge, steward sometime in the 1240s was not a tenant of the honour, though his name suggests that he was a tenant of the honour of Berkhamsted.¹⁹⁴ The steward in 1296/7, Simon de Greenhill, seems not to have been a tenant of the honour and was paid a salary of £20.¹⁹⁵ Other stewards may well have received this salary as well, irrespective of whether they were tenants or not.

The steward was assisted in the administration of the honour by a number of bailiffs. A few of the people who acted as bailiffs of the honour during the thirteenth century can be identified. The record of the 1285 Oxfordshire eyre identifies a certain Humphrey of Rycote as a bailiff, suggesting the possibility that Fulk of Rycote had employed a relative as a bailiff.¹⁹⁶ Other named bailiffs did not have surnames of knightly tenants, apart from John of Hedsor who was a bailiff of the honour in 1298 and may have been the holder of the Wallingford manor at Hedsor in Buckinghamshire.¹⁹⁷

The steward and bailiffs of Wallingford had an important role in the government of the honour, which, as we have seen, was not just a baronial estate but a whole area of special jurisdiction. A letter of 26 April 1298 sheds some light on the activities of the

¹⁹¹ PRO: E 36/57, f. 31v.

¹⁹² *CR 1296-1302*, pp. 460, 528; *CR 1302-1307*, p. 230; *CPR 1301-1307*, p. 197.

¹⁹³ *CPR 1292-1301*, p. 509.

¹⁹⁴ *Select Cases*, pp. 107-8.

¹⁹⁵ *Ministers' Accounts*, pp. 84, 129.

¹⁹⁶ PRO: JUST 1/705, m. 1d.

¹⁹⁷ *CR 1296-1302*, p. 159.

bailiffs and jurisdiction of the honour.¹⁹⁸ King Edward I ordered the sheriff of Berkshire to cause thirteen men to be replevied. They had been taken prisoner by Edmund, earl of Cornwall, Simon de Greenhill and John of Hedsor. The sheriff had apparently passed on the the bailiffs of the honour the king's earlier order to replevy them, but the bailiffs had responded to the sheriff that they had not replevied them yet because they had harboured on a ship of theirs a certain Simon of Cliveden who killed William le Rous of Aldermaston in their presence and who refused to give Simon up and then permitted him to escape by night. The case seems to involve merchants trading on the River Thames who protected a murderer and who were thus detained by the Wallingford bailiffs who denied them replevin until the king wrote on 26 April ordering it. This demonstrates part of the role of the bailiffs of the honour of Wallingford in keeping the king's peace within its manors.

This chapter has considered the government of the honour of Wallingford both in terms of the honour's relationship with the king's government and its officers and institutions and in terms of the administration and rights of the honour's own areas of jurisdiction. It has been shown that the honour was an area of privileged jurisdiction that was exempt from many procedures of royal government, and that as such it was often treated as though it were a county, with its steward acting as sheriff. Furthermore, this state of affairs appears to have been encouraged not only by the earls of Cornwall but by the crown also. It has also been argued that the evidence such as it stands points to the continued significance of the honorial court throughout the thirteenth century, even if it was as one jurisdiction among many to which tenants could turn to for justice in civil

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

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matters. In terms of formal structures, therefore, the honour was very much in existence throughout the period from 1154 to 1300.

5 THE TENANTS OF THE HONOUR: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE KNIGHTLY CLASS, 1154–1300

Thirteenth century sources often describe lay society in terms of hierarchical strata with earls at the top, then barons, knights, freemen, and villeins. Yet the use of the term ‘knight’, or *miles* in Latin, is problematic as the meaning of knighthood was in the process of change. The term had been used in the eleventh century to describe all mounted warriors, whether of peasant or noble birth, with or without land; in this sense, it was a description of function rather than of a certain strata of society. The Angevin legal procedures introduced in the later twelfth century made great use of knights, setting them apart as the only people who could fulfil certain tasks such as sitting as grand assize jurors or viewers of bed-sickness. From the records of these procedures, historians have estimated that the number of knights fell from 4,000-5,000 at the start of the thirteenth century to under 1,500 by the 1320s.¹ Included among knights at the start of the century were a wide range of individuals from *milituli* or petty knights whose landed resources leave little or no trace in the records, to lords of many manors at the top. By the start of the fourteenth century, knighthood was largely confined to a group of wealthier lords of more than two manors; knights had become an elite group.² There has been much debate about the causes and consequences of this decline in the numbers of knights, which will be explored in this chapter.

¹ Faulkner, ‘Transformation of Knighthood’, pp. 1-23; Coss, *Origins*, ch. 4.

² An overview of the literature on this subject is given in Prestwich, *Plantagenet England*, pp. 389-413.

Many historians regard knights in this period as part of the same social group as those who ceased to take up knighthood, and who gradually began adopting styles of esquire in the fourteenth century and gentleman in the fifteenth to distinguish themselves. Consequently they argue that it is useful to use the loose term ‘gentry’ to describe the social group as a whole in the thirteenth century, which at the start was synonymous with knights, but of which those who were belted knights came to form a group within. Indeed, some have suggested that this formulation can be stretched back before 1200 and, as some would argue, as far as Anglo-Saxon England and the twelfth century, when there was also a group of minor landholders. Peter Coss has, however, examined the group as a whole from before the Conquest to the fourteenth century and argues that ‘gentry’ is an unsatisfactory term as it obscures the fact that the English gentry as understood by historians as existing into the modern period emerged only in the middle of the fourteenth century.³ Before c.1350, he argues, may be found conditions that underlay those of the following century, and minor landholders might be called a ‘proto-gentry’, but these were sufficiently different from the gentry for them to be considered a separate phenomenon. Indeed, he warns that in thinking of the gentry existing earlier than 1300, we risk reading back late medieval conditions into very different societies of an earlier period.

Through tenants of the honour of Wallingford, this chapter explores these issues. By taking individual families who held land of the honour as the basis of discussion, it will be possible to address a number of significant areas in the history of lesser landowners. The reasons for the decline in the numbers of knights, and the debates about the ‘crisis of the knightly class’ are addressed. So too is the life style and status of some tenants of the honour in this group, and their position within thirteenth century society.

³ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 1-43.

Their involvement in military activity and in local government and judicial matters will also be explored. This, together with chapter 6, which will examine the social networks and interactions of which tenants were a part, will allow us to examine the question of the emergence of the ‘gentry’. Bearing Coss’s arguments on the use of the term ‘gentry’ in mind, however, this term will be avoided in the following discussion. The term ‘knightly class’ will be used in the sense that it has in the historiography of the period, to mean lords of one or several manors below the baronage, while the term ‘knights’ will be restricted to those who were technically knights. The term ‘tenants of the honour’ will be used to describe all tenants, not just those who were of the knightly class.

The tenantry of the honour of Wallingford in 1300 consisted of a small number of magnates and minor barons, for whom these lands account for just a small portion of their landed wealth.⁴ There were also five religious institutions; the Knights Hospitaller, the Knights Templar, the Hospital of St John the Baptist at High Wycombe, the abbey of Bruern in Oxfordshire, and Merton College in Oxford; that held manors of the honour as a result of grants by their former tenants across the period. The majority of the tenants were lords of one or a few manors; precisely the group from which the later gentry developed, and which has been the subject of much debate among historians. Indeed, the landed wealth of these families straddles just those groups of knights who were ceasing to take up knighthood on the one hand and those who continued to be knights on the other.

Discussion in this chapter is informed by looking widely at the families holding of the honour, but will focus intensively on five of them. They are the Dayrell, Druval,

⁴ Ralph Pippard held the six fees his family had for over a century; Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, held the seven fees of the Basset family of Bicester through marriage; Hugh le Despenser held three fees that had been held by Alan Basset at the start of the century at High Wycombe and Wootton Bassett; and Isabella de Fortibus, countess of Aumale was in possession of the two-and-a-half fees held by Warin fitzGerold.

Chenduit, Rycote and fitzEllis families.⁵ These have been chosen primarily because they present opportunities for research in particularly detailed cartulary evidence, chronicle accounts, or administrative prominence. The existence of well-documented administrative careers as the sole criteria for inclusion has been resisted as much as possible so as to reduce the potential problems of presenting a circular argument. However, the main sources for the study of individuals at this level of society in this early period are the records of royal government and so there is an element of circularity in that the only individuals that can be studied are those with substantial links to royal government. Nevertheless, there were a number of religious houses in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, of which cartularies have survived and been edited and indexed by local history societies, thus facilitating this kind of research and serving to balance out the potentially myopic royal administrative angle from which the modern historian views local society. Further help in this regard are the the hundred roll records for Oxfordshire, and various inquests into landholdings dating from the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. All this, together with topographical and archaeological evidence have been used to reconstruct as full a picture as possible of these five families.

⁵ See genealogical diagrammes, AppendicesAppendix 7Appendix 11.

5.1 ECONOMIC RESOURCES

One explanation for the decline in the numbers of knights in the thirteenth century relates to the economic problems minor landowners faced. Peter Coss, building on separate theories of Rodney Hilton and Michael Postan, argued in an article of 1975 that the knightly class was in crisis during the thirteenth century as a result of their inability to take advantage of the price rises of the period.⁶ He argued that inflation in the period 1180-1220 and the growing cost of maintaining knighthood led to small landowners becoming indebted to Jewish money lenders and that in many cases they were forced to sell lands to acquisitive royal *curiales* and religious houses. Further detailed research into knightly families in Oxfordshire undertaken by David Carpenter, revealed that instances whereby families' economic viability collapsed under the weight of indebtedness were no more than might be detected in any period among landowners, and more specifically that landowners avoided costs of knighthood by simply ceasing to take up the rank, helping to explain the fall in numbers of knights.⁷ Furthermore, many of the Oxfordshire landowners investigated were able to mitigate the effects of inflation and take advantage of price rises by shifting to direct management of their demesne land as opposed to income from rents. Carpenter re-affirmed earlier views of Treharne and Holt that emphasised the increased standards of living and greater political prominence that this section of society enjoyed by the thirteenth century, as a result of more independence from great lords and of administrative experience.⁸

Subsequent examinations of other counties have confirmed Carpenter's findings that the outlook for many families was not as bleak as appears from the evidence Coss

⁶ Coss, 'Geoffrey de Langley', pp. 3-37.

⁷ Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', pp. 721-752.

⁸ Treharne 'The Knights in the Period of Reform', pp. 1-12; Holt, *Northerners*, p. 60.

used in 1975.⁹ In more recent work, Coss has distinguished Postan's thesis of a crisis of the class as a whole, from Hilton's view that the thirteenth century did witness a longer term social and economic crisis accompanying the transformation of the status and ethos of knighthood.¹⁰ This, Coss argues, was an important aspect of the development of the gentry class that emerged in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and helps to explain the fall in numbers of knights, the development of an increasingly stratified society, and the higher levels of consumption and display that marked out a new chivalric knighthood that formed the upper ranks of the emerging gentry class. Contrary to Carpenter and Faulkner, Coss regards the fall in numbers of knights as evidence of the economic difficulties that faced lesser landowners who lacked the resources to shift to demesne farming to exploit the rise in prices in the period. The early thirteenth century was, he suggests, a time of increased competition for power and resources in which knightly families faced particularly difficult economic conditions.¹¹

This section examines the economic resources of the knightly families holding substantial portions of their lands of the honour of Wallingford and considers both the strains placed upon them that might have contributed to their experiencing economic difficulties. It also looks at the strategies they adopted to mitigate the effects of these strains.

⁹ Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, ch. 8; esp. pp. 77-8; Polden, 'Crisis', pp. 29-57.

¹⁰ Ibid.; Coss, *Origins*, pp. 88-107.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 106.

5.1.1 Sources of Wealth

Surviving information about individuals at this level of society is sparse and uneven. Nevertheless, the thirteenth century is the earliest period when detailed enough information survives to be able to describe the economic resources available to people of this kind. The hundred roll returns for Oxfordshire provide a detailed picture of Oxfordshire holdings in 1279. This information is supplemented by inquests into the holdings of tenants of the honour of Wallingford who died after 1300 when the honour escheated to the crown.

The tenants of the honour were, on the whole, wealthy when compared with many individuals classed as knights in the judicial records of the early thirteenth century. The modal value for the number of knights' fees each tenancy held by a knightly family owed in 1300 was one.¹² This does not take into account lands held outside the honour, nor can we be clear as to the amount of land a knight's fee contained, but it does show that fractional fees, though present in the honour, were not as common as in some cases and suggests a relatively well-endowed group of tenants among whom the land of the honour was dispersed. All the families' economic resources, not just those held of the honour, form part of this investigation.

The Druvals and the Rycotes appear to have had only one manor each. The Druvals held Goring in Oxfordshire, while the Rycotes held the manor of Rycote also in Oxfordshire, though there is evidence that the Rycotes built up further property elsewhere in the form of parcels of land and urban rents. The Dayrells held two manors, one at Lillingstone Dayrell in Buckinghamshire and the other fifty miles away at Hanworth in

¹² Calculated by eliminating the larger tenancies of magnates mentioned above in n. 4 above.

Middlesex. The Chenduit and fitzEllis families were slightly wealthier with between three and five manors each at any one time. The Chenduits held manors at Langley (Hertfordshire), Chesham (Buckhamshire), and Cuxham (Oxfordshire) as well as land at Swanbourne, Pitstone, Cheddington in Buckinghamshire, Stanmore in Middlesex, Cosgrove in Northamptonshire, Hemel Hempstead, in Hertfordshire, and Clapcot in Berkshire.¹³ The fitzEllises held manors at Waterperry, Worminghall and Tiddington (Oxfordshire), Oakley (Buckinghamshire) and Corton (Wiltshire).

Many of the honour's tenants were fortunate enough to have had substantial landed resources in the well-irrigated and fertile Oxfordshire plain. The fitzEllises and the Rycotes had their main residences near the main road between Oxford and London, and were just over ten miles away from the important centre of Oxford. The Dayrells had a manor at Hanworth, on one of the main routes in and out of London. The Druvals' manor was at a cross-roads at the point where the ancient Icknield Way crossed the Thames that may have been an Anglo-Saxon settlement of some importance, if not size, and which had been held by Wigod of Wallingford before the Conquest.¹⁴ A consistent pattern in the organisation of manorial resources is visible from the hundred rolls. The manors were exploited in a variety of ways allowing for much flexibility; by managing demesne land, by collecting the rents of tenants, and by collecting the profits from mills and fisheries. The families were therefore relatively privileged by the environment in which they found themselves.

¹³ *VCH Hertford*, ii, pp. 234-45, pp. 264-73.

¹⁴ Blair, 'Foundation of Goring Priory', p. 196.

5.1.2 Economic difficulties and survival

Out of sixty families holding lands of the honour at the start of the century, twenty-seven were still in possession of their Wallingford manors in 1300.¹⁵ Slightly fewer than half of the families survived the thirteenth century. Fourteen of the thirty-three families did not survive in the male line, but their lands passed to daughters and thereafter to different lineages. Of the remaining families that ceased to be tenants through the thirteenth century, the only family that seems to have been forced to sell their lands because of financial strain were the Chenduits. Of the remainder, several individuals who received Wallingford fees from King John gave them up in the 1220s; these included Hugh de Malauney and Robert de Vipont. Hugh's lands at Chalgrove were taken by the crown as *terra Normannorum* and granted to Drew de Barrentyn and Hugh de Plessis, while Robert de Vipont gave his fee at High Wycombe to the Templars before his death in 1227. The Bassets of Ipsden lost Oakley to the fitzEllis family through a legal dispute. In several cases such as that of the manor of Wormsley in Buckinghamshire where the Wormsley family had been replaced by four tenants by 1300, the reasons for the manor's alienation are unclear and there may have been an element of financial difficulty, though this cannot be concluded for certain. The Dayrells and the Chenduits suffered the loss of a major portion of their landed property before the end of the thirteenth century, though the Dayrells were able to recover in the early fourteenth century. The Chenduits, as we shall see, were less successful. On the other hand, there is also much evidence that the families successfully pursued a range of strategies to mitigate these effects. Several of the families expanded their holdings, increasing in wealth across the period as a whole.

¹⁵ This excludes the abbot of Bruerne and the lands held of the honour by the abbey of Bec.

Despite the rarity of examples of complete financial ruin, members of the families experienced financial difficulties throughout the period. The earliest example is that of the fitzEllis family who at the end of the twelfth century were experiencing considerable problems. The family had almost lost their manor of Waterperry in a dispute with Richard de Beufeu but had managed to come to an agreement whereby they retained two thirds of the manor. They were also having problems securing their claim to the manor of Oakley against the Basset family of Oakley and Ipsden.¹⁶ In 1198 Emma fitzEllis described herself as being ‘in great need’ and was forced to ask the monks of Oseney for the return of two virgates of land in Ledhall that she had given them when her son Henry had become a canon there. The monks ‘sympathising with her grief’ agreed to return one of the virgates.¹⁷ Emma’s ‘great need’, however, was for money to finance litigation which paid off for the family; they recovered from this period of difficulty and thrived for the rest of the century, and appear to have fared better than some of their fellow Wallingford tenants.¹⁸

Hugh de Druval was granted respite of knighthood in 1240 which may suggest financial strain.¹⁹ This is likely to have been the result of the cost of knighthood being prohibitively high at the time. Hugh was forced to borrow money from Jewish money lenders and by 1255 he had owed Abraham of Berkhamsted a manageable sum of £15 when the king ordered Abraham’s debtors to be distrained by local sheriffs.²⁰ As we shall see, he or his son did take up knighthood in later decades.

¹⁶ See below, pp. 340.

¹⁷ *CIPM*, i, no. 73; *Oseney*, iv, p. 389; *VCH Oxfordshire*, v, p. 296.

¹⁸ Carpenter, ‘Was there a crisis?’, p. 736.

¹⁹ *CR 1237-1242*, p. 343.

²⁰ *CR 1254-1256*, pp. 170-72.

Stephen Chenduit and his debts to the Jews

Jewish debt was a significant problem for knights in the thirteenth century, and no case illustrates this better than that of the Chenduit family.²¹ Stephen was a prominent knight, among the wealthiest of local knights examined here. He was close to Richard, earl of Cornwall, and to the earl's son, Henry of Almain. Although considerably wealthy by knightly standards, he borrowed money from Jewish money-lenders. The reasons for this are unknown though he appears to have been unable to repay his debts. The earliest record we have of Stephen's Jewish debt is a royal writ of December 1264 entered on the fine roll and issued under the king's name but during the period Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester, was in control of the realm. The order cancelled all of Stephen's debts.²² This was in accordance with the Montfortian regime's general attitude to Jewish debts. Earl Simon, partly for reasons of piety and the influence of Franciscan teaching, and partly to attract the support of knights and other men of the localities who were feeling economic pressure, acted against the practice of Jewish money lending. He had already expelled the Jews from Leicester in 1231, and between October 1264 and June 1265, he issued royal writs pardoning sixty individuals.²³ This was in the context of widespread attacks on Jews in 1264 that had seen them slaughtered at Worcester, London, Canterbury and elsewhere.²⁴ By 14 November 1265, after the fall of the Montfortian regime, the king granted to Hagin, son of Master Moses, a Jew of London, that he would not make any prorogation or quittance or gift in respect of any debts wherein Stephen and other

²¹ Coss, 'Geoffrey de Langley', p. 25; Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 743.

²² *CFR 1264-1265*, no. 54.

²³ Coss, 'Geoffrey de Langley', pp. 31-3; Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, pp. 315-316.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 315

named debtors were bound to him.²⁵ Whether these were additional debts to those cancelled by Montfort or whether the cancellation had been revoked by the royal government and Hagin had sought confirmation that the money was still owed is unclear, but Stephen was evidently once again in debt.

The debt must have been too large for him to manage and he was forced to alienate much of his land. By 1267/8 he had sold his land in Clapcot by Wallingford castle to Richard of Cornwall's baker, John de Fraunton, on account of his Jewish debt.²⁶ Around this time, Bishop Walter de Merton acquired four of Stephen's manors, which were used to endow the college Walter founded at Oxford.²⁷ These were the Wallingford manor of Cuxham in Oxfordshire, Ibstone and Cheddington in Buckinghamshire, and Middleton Cheney in Northamptonshire. Stephen was also forced to sell his other Wallingford manor, Isenhampstead Chenduit to Hugh fitzOtto who was to hold the manor of Stephen for an annual rent of 1d, in return for an enormous payment of £500.²⁸ Indebtedness therefore appears to have crippled the Chenduits economically, forcing them to lose much of their landed wealth. Stephen's son, Sir Stephen (II) Chenduit inherited his father's debts, but also appears to have retained knightly status as well as important connections.

Stephen (I) had been careful to retain the overlordship of the manor of Isenhampstead Chenduit, which seems to have benefitted his heir. When Hugh fitzOtto died in 1283, he left a daughter named Joan. Edmund, earl of Cornwall, claimed the wardship of this daughter as his right as lord of Wallingford but Stephen (II) successfully

²⁵ *CPR 1258-1266*, p. 505.

²⁶ *CPEJ*, i, 155-6; 214.

²⁷ Highfield, *Early Rolls of Merton*, pp. 41-2.

²⁸ *Buckinghamshire Feet of Fines, 1259-1307*, no. 245; *VCH Buckingham*, iii, pp. 203-218.

maintained that Otto held the manor of him by knight service, and that the wardship was therefore his right.²⁹ He granted the custody of Joan to Eleanor of Castile, the queen, in return for an annual rent of £20.³⁰ It seems that the queen was involved in the Chenduits' attempts to resolve their debt problems. In 1278, the queen and Stephen Chenduit had made an agreement whereby Stephen purchased a number of houses in Lincoln from Hagin, son of Master Moses, a Jew of London, and these properties were then ordered to be handed over to the queen. A marginal note entered on the close roll for 1281 and written in French listed the manors bought by Queen Eleanor, sheds some light on the matter and reveals the magnitude of the Chenduits' debt. It stated the following:

Sir Stephen de Chenedut owed to divers Jews fully 1000 marks, whereof the king gave to the queen 400 marks of the debt of Agyn and 600 marks belonged to the queen for her gold. And of the aforesaid 1000 marks the queen pardoned Stephen 300 marks, and for the remaining 700 marks and for other great bounty that the queen has done to him, the king retains the manor [of Langley, Hertfordshire] for ever, worth £40.³¹

The Chenduits thus lost almost everything, including their home manor at Langley in Hertfordshire, which their ancestors may have had held since 1086.

Stephen (II) Chenduit and Ralph Chenduit, who was probably his uncle, continue to appear in records after the loss of the family lands. Ralph released to the warden and scholars of Merton his right to the lands that had belonged to his brother Stephen in 1283.³² Walter de Merton made generous provision for the wife and two daughters of Stephen Chenduit in his will.³³ The men of the family continued to have contact with Merton College for many decades afterwards. In 1289 the bursar of Merton paid Stephen

²⁹ *CR 1279-1288*, p. 206; *VCH Buckingham*, iii, pp. 203-218.

³⁰ *CPR 1281-1292*, p. 416.

³¹ *CR 1279-1288*, p. 80.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 241.

³³ *Early Rolls of Merton*, p. 82.

17d expenses for travelling to London.³⁴ The surviving records of the manor of Cuxham reveal that Stephen visited his family's former manor every year from 1308 to 1317, usually but not always around Christmas time, either in late December or early January. In 1309 he was accompanied by two boys, and in January 1313 he was with the warden of Merton. He appears to have been involved in the management of the estates in some capacity, perhaps employed by the college. In January 1310, he was recorded as returning the horse he had ridden home to Oxford. It is perhaps striking that one of the last extant references to the senior Chenduit line returning a borrowed horse to the new owners of his family's lands. Debt had clearly brought economic disaster to one of the honour of Wallingford's wealthiest knightly families.

Providing for collaterals

Another potential strain on knightly families in this period was providing for collateral relatives. Thomas and Coss have drawn attention to the way the Angevin legal reforms formalised the arrangements made within families to the point of threatening the family's patrimony.³⁵ Quite apart from the increasing cultural importance attached to the maintenance of a patrimonial inheritance, for families holding only one or a few manors, maintaining an estate large enough to support the senior line in the same status could be an economic necessity. Providing for collateral relatives was, nevertheless, an important task. William de Druval who held Goring in 1154 had four sons, Richard, Robert, Ralph

³⁴ Ibid., p. 226.

³⁵ Coss, *Origins*, p. 102.

and Hugh.³⁶ Ralph, the third son, began a separate dynasty of landholders in Goring using the surname Waleis.³⁷

The problem of having to provide for children other than the eldest son certainly affected the fitzEllis family on several occasions. William (II) fitzEllis granted the manor of Tiddington in Oxfordshire to his brother Ellis fitzEllis for life ‘with remainder to whichever of his heirs, lawfully begotten, he should wish to assign the same’ for which he was to render yearly ‘a pair of gilt spurs or 6d at Easter, at Waterperry.’³⁸ Both brothers, it seems, were knights suggesting Ellis was well endowed. He, or perhaps a nephew of the same name,³⁹ also held lands in the fitzEllis manor of Oakley. He gave these to Simon son of Alan de Maydewell⁴⁰ in 1240, and they were subsequently granted by William (III) to Simon’s daughter Alice in 1262.⁴¹ In this instance it is clear that a portion of their estates were lost to the direct male line through providing for a wider family circle. Tiddington itself seems to have reverted to William (III) who had, by 1279, granted it to his younger son, Roger fitzEllis.⁴² Roger also received the manor of Corton in Wiltshire which was, from the mid thirteenth century, held by Roger’s descendants separately from the main fitzEllis line.⁴³ Despite these examples of the alienation of lands and the division of estates, the fitzEllis family maintained their wealth and position in society.

It was not just provision for younger sons that could cause the diminution of a family’s patrimony. Heads of the knightly families had to find land to settle on daughters

³⁶ *Eynsham*, no. 127; *Goring Charters*, no. 342.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. lxvii.

³⁸ *Ancient Deeds*, iv, A.7194.

³⁹ *Oxfordshire Eyre 1241*, p. 28.

⁴⁰ Described as his ‘nephew’ but the precise relationship is obscure.

⁴¹ *Boarstall*, p. 145.

⁴² *RH*, ii, p. 714.

⁴³ Macnamara, *Memorials*, p. 207; Ellis, ‘Notices of the Ellises,’ p. 201; *VCH Wiltshire*, ix, p. 55.

as a marriage portion. In many cases the nature of the provision made is unknown, but we do have one example from the middle of the thirteenth century. Henry (I) Dayrell's daughter Emma, sister of Ralph (III) Dayrell, married Richard Grusset, a successful lawyer who had acted as an attorney for the queen.⁴⁴ In 1262 Ralph (III) gave them a messuage in Lillingstone Dayrell and the reversion of the property of Henry (I)'s widow, Ralph and Emma's mother.⁴⁵ Providing for the marriage of Emma out of the reversion of her mother's dower lands shows how the Dayrells managed to deal with such expectations with limited resources.

Overall, the Wallingford knightly families successfully provided for collateral relatives while not draining their own resources too much. One common way of doing this was to ensure that rather than dividing fees, collateral kin held in a tenurially dependant relationship to the head of the senior branch allowing for the eventual reversion of the alienated land, which in turn could let the same lands to be recycled for the same purpose in different generations. The fitzEllis manor of Tiddington was granted out to Ellis but on his death apparently without heirs, the manor reverted and could be granted by William (III) fitzEllis to his own son, Roger. The Druvals also managed the process well. They held only one manor at Goring, and in 1279 three relatives of the main branch held a total one hide and one and a half virgates including one hide held for a fifth and a quarter of a knight's fee by Walter Waleis, descendant of Ralph son of William de Druval. Considering the large number of collateral relatives there had been over the previous century, the comparatively small amount of tenant land set aside for the

⁴⁴ Boatwright, 'Introduction', *Buckinghamshire Eyre 1281*, p. 47.

⁴⁵ *Feet of Fines Buckinghamshire 1259-1307*, no. 40; *Luffield Charters*, p. xlvii; *RH*, ii, p. 340.

Druval's kin by 1279 illustrates the negligible effect that providing for collaterals had on their resources.

Another way of providing for younger sons and daughters was for them to enter religious houses. In the twelfth century there were several instances of this happening. Hugh, the fourth son of the William de Druval who held Goring in 1154, entered the abbey of Eynsham in the mid-twelfth century. The charter William issued on this occasion, with the assent of his other three sons, was witnessed by, among others, Riulf de Saisson (constable of Wallingford during part of Stephen's reign, though not described as such here), who died in or before 1160, and by William Boterel (also constable of Wallingford) who died before 1154.⁴⁶ Later in the twelfth century, Emma, sister of Thomas and Hugh de Druval, entered Goring Priory sometime between 1173 and 1181.⁴⁷ Around 1170, Henry, a younger son of William (I) fitzEllis, became a canon at Oseney Abbey.⁴⁸ It is interesting that there are no examples of younger sons or daughters entering religious houses in the thirteenth century. This may be a limitation of the evidence, but it may also reflect changing attitudes and an increased focus on the parish church. It may also reflect the fact that when younger sons and daughters entered a religious house it was usual for families to make a donation of land. William de Druval gave Eynsham one hide and twenty-seven acres of land in Goring when his son Hugh joined the community, Goring Priory received from the brothers of Emma de Druval an augmentation of the priory's *curia* in Goring when she joined, and Oseney gained two virgates when Henry fitzEllis became a canon there.

⁴⁶ *Eynsham*, nos. 127, 128; *Pipe Roll 7 Henry II*, p. 54; *Historia*, ii, pp. 316-17.

⁴⁷ *Thame*, no. 140; Blair, 'Foundation of Goring Priory', pp. 194-97.

⁴⁸ *Oseney*, iv, p. 388.

5.1.3 Economic consolidation and expansion

A number of the families appear to have prospered in the thirteenth century, to have increased their wealth, and to have ended the century in a much better position than they began it. They were able to do this through effective exploitation of demesne land, making advantageous marriages, by bearing down more heavily on their peasant tenants through a variety of means, and through office-holding.

One of the ways in which tenants of the honour avoided economic difficulty was by turning to demesne farming. Carpenter observed that many Oxfordshire families were able to turn the rising prices of the early thirteenth century to their advantage by shifting away from rental income to demesne farming and selling corn they produced directly themselves.⁴⁹ Families with estates based predominantly on rents, Coss argues, were less well placed to weather the economic conditions of the time.⁵⁰ All of the manors for which anything is known had a significant element of demesne land which the lord of the manor could cultivate himself directly. At Goring, Hugh de Druval held two carucates in demesne which was probably approximately 200 acres in 1279.⁵¹ The manor of Cuxham in Oxfordshire had by that year had passed to Merton College, though the demesne of two carucates and eleven acres of new pasture were recorded as having been the same as in the time Stephen de Chenduit held the manor.⁵² Fulk (II) of Rycote's demesne was not recorded in 1279 but the inquest at his death found that he held 160 acres at Rycote.⁵³ The fitzEllises had a larger demesne of four hides at Waterperry in 1279 and this was

⁴⁹ Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 740.

⁵⁰ Coss, 'Geoffrey de Langley', pp. 15-16; Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, p. 307.

⁵¹ *RH*, ii, pp. 777. For size of carucate in Oxfordshire, see Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?' p. 740, n. 7.

⁵² *RH*, ii, p. 758.

⁵³ Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 742, n. 4.

only one of their manors; the size of the demesne at Oakley is unknown.⁵⁴ Some smaller manors had smaller but still substantial demesnes of 100 acres.⁵⁵ As Carpenter points out, Walter of Henley in his treatise on agricultural administration gives advice based on a demesne of 160 acres across two fields and 180 acres across three, which in Oxfordshire would be the equivalent of about two hides.⁵⁶ Walter, who was probably from Oxfordshire himself, was evidently working on the basis of his experience with knightly estates in that area. It reflects the Druval, Chenduit and Rycote family demesne almost exactly, while the fitzEllis demesne was apparently double the size and others were slightly below.

There is also evidence that demesne holdings had been expanded by knightly lords during the thirteenth century. Ralph Chenduit appears to have purchased the lands of several free tenants in order to enlarge and consolidate his demesne holding at Cuxham; a process that continued under the management of Merton College after 1268.⁵⁷ In 1235 Henry Dayrell gave the king a palfrey worth five marks as security for permission from the king to assart six acres of his wood in Lillingstone Dayrell within the royal forest, which Henry III granted.⁵⁸ An entry in the hundred rolls, written around 1255 (by which time Henry's son Ralph had inherited his father's lands), records that Henry had made an assart which his son now held and for which he rendered thirty-eight shillings annually to the crown.⁵⁹ In 1279, Lillingstone Dayrell had thirty-two acres of assarted land. Assarting in this case probably involved the clearing of woodland, which

⁵⁴ *RH*, ii, p. 725; Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 741.

⁵⁵ For example, Sir Peter de Cowdray at Gatehampton (*RH*, ii, p. 778), Sir Laurence Basset at Ipsden (*RH*, ii, p. 781), and the Wormsleys' manor at Wormsley (*RH*, ii, p. 786).

⁵⁶ *Walter of Henley*, pp. 314-15, 157, 189; Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?' p. 740.

⁵⁷ Harvey, *A Medieval Oxfordshire Village*, pp. 4-5, 21, 113-115; Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 743.

⁵⁸ *CFR 1234-1235*, 19/171.

⁵⁹ *RH*, i, p. 32.

was very much a feature of the landscape in the part of Buckinghamshire where Lillingstone lay. Indeed, Ralph Dayrell's estate in 1279 included twenty acres of woodland in addition to the assart, and in the 1255 entry there is a mention of Henry Dayrell 'laying waste' to a rood of his woodland (*Dominus Henricus Dayrell vastavit unam rodam bosci sui*), though this may just mean that he cut down the trees.⁶⁰ The survival of the hundred roll evidence is limited and not all of the estates owned by the families under discussion are covered by the extant rolls. From the estates where records do survive, there appears to be no further evidence of assarted land, though this in part reflects the fact that southern Oxfordshire was a heavily cultivated part of the country.

Other resources directly managed by knightly lords, such as woodland, fisheries, pannage, meadow, pasture and mills are much in evidence. Several of the families made use of their proximity to rivers and maintained fisheries. In 1279, Sir Robert fitzEllis's manor at Waterperry included fish weirs in the River Thame and a fish pool.⁶¹ Fulk of Rycote had a fishery at 'Abinton' (which may have been modern Abington in the suburbs of Northampton) which is known about because Sir Edward de Grey, his tenant by knight service, was accused of fishing in it without permission.⁶² The record of the inquest taken at the death of Sir Henry (II) Dayrell in 1302 referred to a fishery at his manor in Hanworth.⁶³ The Druvals with their manor on the bank of the Thames might be expected to have had some sort of fishery though there is no evidence of one, only one held in Goring by the Prior of Ogbourne.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ *RH*, ii, p. 340; i, p. 32.

⁶¹ *RH*, ii, p. 725.

⁶² Farrer, *Honours*, p. 59.

⁶³ *CIPM*, iv, p. 94.

⁶⁴ *RH*, ii, pp. 777-778.

Woodland also commonly formed part of these families' economic resources. The fitzEllis's manor of Waterperry lay close to the royal forest of Bernwood in which they owned a wood called Ledhall Wood in 1279.⁶⁵ The Dayrell family's manor of Lillingstone Dayrell was also situated in a heavily wooded part of the country and close to the royal forests of Whittlewood, Silverstone and Salcey. In a charter datable to 1174x1198 Robert Dayrell granted Luffield Priory land in his wood at Westbury in Lillingstone for the building of a chapel dedicated to St Thomas Becket.⁶⁶ There was also woodland at Goring. The hide of land that William de Druval granted to Eynsham when his fourth son Hugh entered the monastery included thirty-two acres of woodland in 1279.⁶⁷ There was a dispute in the 1260s between Sir Hugh de Druval and the abbey of Eynsham over the boundary between the abbot's woodland and that of the Druvals.⁶⁸

Some of the families had mills of different kinds at their manors. The Rycote family's manor at Rycote included at least one windmill that was granted as dower to Sir Fulk (II) of Rycote's widow, Margaret, on his death in 1302.⁶⁹ The Dayrells had a watermill at Hanworth in Middlesex by the time of the death of Henry (II) Dayrell in 1302.⁷⁰ The Chenduit family's manor at Langley may have had two mills. One of these was held by the Chenduit family as early as 1179.⁷¹ In 1246 an agreement was made between William de Chenduit son of Ralph (III) de Chenduit by which William acknowledged that another mill at Little Langley belonged to the abbey of St Alban's,

⁶⁵ *RH*, ii, p. 725.

⁶⁶ *Luffield Charters*, ii, nos. 371, 372.

⁶⁷ *RH*, ii, pp. 777-778.

⁶⁸ Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre Roll of 1261', ii, no. 250.

⁶⁹ *CIPM*, iv, p. 46.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, iv, p. 94.

⁷¹ *Missenden*, ii, no. 388; iii, no. 874.

and the abbot granted William the mill to hold hereditarily from St Alban's for his homage and the service of 20s a year.⁷²

Each of the knightly families in this period had similar kinds of economic resources, any differences tending to be of degree rather than kind. Nevertheless, within each estate there was a great deal of variety with the families gaining income from demesne farming, from rents, and from the profits of mills. It is striking that none of the families appear to have held markets or fairs at their manors.⁷³ Within the honour of Wallingford, this privilege seems to have been enjoyed only at a higher social level; so for instance, the Bassets of Bicester had a Thursday market at their Wallingford manor of Uxbridge which in 1182x1188 he granted to his burgesses there.⁷⁴ King Henry III granted permission on 15 February 1228 for a market at the Wallingford manor of Great Haseley held by the Pippards, a family of baronial rank, but the grant was made during the minority of William Pippard to his guardian, Ralph son of Nicholas.⁷⁵ Richard of Cornwall himself was granted a Wednesday market at Watlington on 20 June 1252.⁷⁶ The tenants who were merely local knights seem not to have had markets. That is not to say that they were not involved in trade and commerce at all.

It is highly likely that all of the families had dealings with major urban centres in the region, as we shall see below, and one of the principal reasons for this contact may well have been trade. Fulk (II) of Rycote is also known to have held property in the town of Oxford. Sometime before 1261, he had sold annual rents of 40s 10d to Lucas de Wurthe, who subsequently granted them to Oseney Abbey. These rents included sixteen

⁷² *CR 1333-1337*, p. 236.

⁷³ *Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs*.

⁷⁴ *Basset Charters*, no. 184.

⁷⁵ *CR 1227-31*, p. 20.

⁷⁶ *CChR 1226-57*, p. 393.

shops and other land.⁷⁷ This was evidently not Fulk's entire holding, as he still had rent of two shillings a year from a corner messuage in the parish of St Peter in the East, which he granted to the hospital of St John the Baptist in Oxford in 1274/5, and he sold further rents to Oseney in 1273/4.⁷⁸ The fitzEllis family also held property in Oxford, in the parish of St Peter in the East, which William (II) quitclaimed to the Hospital of St John in the early 1220s.⁷⁹ The extent of other families' urban involvement is unknown though it is quite possible that Rycotes and fitzEllises were not alone in owning property in Oxford or other towns, not least Wallingford where tenants were obliged to attend the honour court and where in the mid-thirteenth century, Richard of Cornwall had his main residence.

Many of the knightly families thus had resources sufficient to allow for flexibility were it needed in the face of difficult economic conditions. One important element of Coss's theory of the decline in numbers of knights is that some families were reliant on income from rents, the level of which could often be protected by custom, meaning that it was the free tenants who farmed the land rather than their knightly lords who benefitted from rising prices.⁸⁰ Among knightly families at this level, rents formed an important part of the structure of many of the families' rural manors. At Goring, the Druvals had an unusually high number of free tenants in 1279.⁸¹ In total, the land held by twenty-three free tenants of the Druvals amounted to a little over 5 hides and 2 virgates; approximately seventy per cent of arable land on the manor, compared to the thirty per cent Hugh de Druval held in demesne. There were also another twenty-two acres, nine cottages and a

⁷⁷ *Oseney*, i, no. 21.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 376; *St John the Baptist*, nos. 214, 215.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 240, 241.

⁸⁰ Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 131.

⁸¹ *RH*, ii, pp. 777-778.

messuage which were held by individual cottars paying 16d each. Twenty-three free tenants were recorded in the hundred roll entry for different services and rents. The sum of cash rents recorded as being owed to Hugh de Druval was £3 15s 1d a year, which was a reasonable amount but relatively small for such a large proportion of the manor. To make matters worse for the Druvals, several of the free tenants were high-status individuals such as the countess of Albemarle, the priories of Wallingford and Ogbourne, the abbey of Eynsham as well as several members of the Druval family. The countess of Albemarle paid a reasonable 5s rent for her virgate but family members and religious houses did not provide cash rents, holding as they did in free alms in the case of the latter and service in the former. Coss argued that the manorial situation depended on the coercive power of lords; in Goring, the Druval lords are likely to have had only limited if any coercive power over these free tenants.⁸² Free tenants, such as those at Goring, may indeed have been among the chief beneficiaries of the expanding economy of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries and the concomitant rise in land values, as Coss found in the locality of Coventry.⁸³

Not all knightly lords did as badly from rental income. Ralph Dayrell was able to draw £6 1s from seven-and-a-half virgates held by fifteen villeins each holding half a virgate and rendering 7s a year, and six cottars each paying 2s 8d.⁸⁴ He had only six free tenants who paid £1 6s a year for two hides and one-and-a-half virgates and a cottage. Included in this sum was Ralph's brother-in-law Richard Grusset, a lawyer, who held three virgates in demesne and £1 10s a year in rents, for which he rendered 4s to Ralph. This was probably his sister Emma's marriage portion which would have only been

⁸² Coss, 'Geoffrey de Langley', p. 16.

⁸³ Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, p. 131.

⁸⁴ *RH*, ii, p. 340.

created in the 1260s.⁸⁵ Such terms were no doubt intended to be favourable to Richard and Emma and so would have reduced the income of the manor as a whole.

Rents from the unfree tenants at Lillingstone, however, appear to have brought in a more reasonable income. John Hatcher argues that unfree tenants, perhaps even more so than free tenants, were protected from exactions of their lords by customary laws, which would confirm Coss's arguments.⁸⁶ Hatcher argues they benefitted from the rise in land values as a result of their lords' inability to increase rents in accordance with the market. The 7s a year rents paid by the Dayrells' half-virgate-holding tenants may have been lower than the market value, but it is still higher than most free tenants paid for similar or larger amounts of land. In one case, we have evidence of one of the knightly lords ignoring customary laws and raising rents. The tenants of Fulk (II) of Rycote complained to the hundred commissioners in 1279, despite the fact that Fulk himself was one of the commissioners, that while they paid an annual rent of 16s per virgate, they had anciently paid only 5s and various services suggesting that Fulk had increased the rents due from his tenants and that while they disputed the change, they had no way of redressing their grievance within the manor, as Hatcher suggested was often possible.⁸⁷

By being one of the hundred commissioners, Fulk may have been able to secure his case against his tenants. Legal knowledge, experience and great wealth were advantages for knightly lords, allowing them to use the royal courts to their advantage in dealings with their tenants. Henry Dayrell was involved in litigation in the royal courts with some of his free tenants in 1237. One aspect of this involved litigation through the

⁸⁵ *Feet of Fines Buckinghamshire 1259-1307*, no. 40; *Luffield Charters*, ii, p. xlvii.

⁸⁶ Hatcher, 'English Serfdom', pp. 1-38, p. 15; Coss, 'Sir Geoffrey de Langley', p. 27.

⁸⁷ *RH*, ii, p. 757; Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 744. Fulk was himself one of Oxfordshire's hundred commissioners so how they made the complaint in practice is unclear.

royal courts. In 1237, Henry Dayrell sued Hugh de St Martin, John the vicar of Lillingstone, Henry the chaplain of Lillingstone, William son of Absolom, William Ade and Ada Hosel, his neighbours and tenants in Lillingstone Dayrell, asking by what right they had demanded common usage in his land.⁸⁸ Those accused responded that they and their ancestors had made common use of Henry's land since the conquest of England, and that Henry and his ancestors had similarly made common use of theirs for the same time. The identities of the defendants are unknown, though the vicar and chaplain of Lillingstone evidently held land in the village, and William Ade was probably related to the Peter Ada who held ten virgates of land in Lillingstone for a rent of seven shillings a year in 1279.⁸⁹ Nothing more is known of this case and of the context in which this dispute arose, but Henry was clearly in conflict with his neighbours and tenants; he was apparently challenging their rights in his land. It shows Henry Dayrell using the royal courts to pursue his interests in managing his estate at Lillingstone. This local power was for Henry Dayrell and Fulk of Rycote an important aspect of the way they protected and expanded their economic resources.

Families at this level, as Coss has pointed out, possessed many advantages that both helped sustain them economically and gave them opportunities to expand, including access to office-holding, to the marriage market, and to patronage.⁹⁰ It is likely that they could make money, directly or indirectly, through holding administrative office. The role of knights in local government and the significance of holding administrative office will be discussed in greater detail below, but it is worth considering in the context of the economic and financial well-being of the knightly families. The Rycotes provide a

⁸⁸ *CRR*, xvi, no. 211.

⁸⁹ *RH*, ii, p. 340.

⁹⁰ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 73, 79.

particularly important example of this. The family ended the thirteenth century with their wealth and status intact and quite possibly enhanced compared to their position in 1200. Fulk (II) was a prominent local administrator acting as we shall see as sheriff, as coroner, as a hundred commissioner in 1279, and as steward of the honour of Wallingford. Some of these offices at least, may have brought opportunities to increase wealth, whether through abuses and corruption or through receiving a salary. In 1285, a large number of complaints were made to the visiting royal justices about Fulk of Rycote's actions while in office as a coroner, as sheriff and as steward of Wallingford.⁹¹ In addition to gains he could make in these roles, it is likely is that as steward of Wallingford he received a salary for his work. In 1297/8, the steward of the honour at the time, Simon de Greenhill, received a payment of £20 a year.⁹² For the lord of a single manor, this would have been a major contribution to his income and an important source of additional wealth.

Marriage too was an important means of economic expansion for the families. Indeed for the fitzEllis family, marriage was the foundation of the family's wealth. William (I) fitzEllis appears to have originated in the north, only becoming established in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire as a result of his marriage to Emma de Brai, who, as the heiress of Fulk de Brai, brought William the manor of Waterperry and the claim to the manor of Oakley.⁹³ More properties were acquired by the fitzEllis family over the years between 1180 and 1346, mainly through marriage. William (II) married Rose de la Rokele who brought landed interests in Essex to the marriage, though their nature and extent is unclear and they seem to have been short-lived, perhaps forming part of a

⁹¹ For example, PRO: JUST 1/705, m. 1d.

⁹² *Ministers' Accounts*, p. 129.

⁹³ *Oseney*, iv, p. 373; *VCH Oxfordshire*, v, pp. 296-98; Ellis, 'Notices of the Ellises', pp. 6, 57.

marriage portion.⁹⁴ Longer lasting was the estate in Nethercote, Wiltshire, which Robert fitzEllis's wife, Margaret Pippard brought to the family and which remained part of their holdings into the fifteenth century.⁹⁵

Ralph (III) Chenduit greatly extended his wealth through his marriage to Joan, the heiress of Walter Foliot who held manors at Cuxham (Oxfordshire), and Isenhamsted in Chesham (Buckinghamshire), which passed to the Chenduit family substantially adding to their landed wealth.⁹⁶ Ralph later married Matilda de Husee, who had claims to lands in Nottinghamshire and Hampshire, and which she and Ralph pursued through the royal courts in the early 1240s.⁹⁷

Henry Dayrell married Joan, one of three daughters of Roger de Stamford who died sometime before 1236 leaving three daughters, Emma, Joan and Matilda as co-heiresses.⁹⁸ Emma married William de Beauchamp, Maud married John *Medicus*. Each gained a share in the manor, and all three sued one John son of Henry de Braybroc for part of their inheritance in 1236.⁹⁹ Henry's marriage to Joan de Stamford brought a third of the manor of Saunderton St Nicholas in Buckinghamshire together with the right of advowson to the church of St Nicholas, into the Dayrell family's hands.¹⁰⁰ Although not a large manor, this would have been a substantial gain for the family. The Dayrells continued to hold their third of Saunderton in 1300.¹⁰¹ The experiences of the fitzEllis, Chenduit and Dayrell families demonstrate that making good marriages could be an

⁹⁴ William (II) fitzEllis paid scutage in Essex in 1210: *Pipe Roll 12 John*, p. 199, while his wife was in dispute with a relative, Humphrey de la Rokele in the same year: *CRR*, vi, p. 38.

⁹⁵ *CChR 1327-1341*, p. 486; *Feudal Aids*, v, p. 279.

⁹⁶ Harvey, *Medieval Oxfordshire Village*, p. 4.

⁹⁷ *CRR*, xvii, pp. 320, 329, 331, 340; xviii, pp. 7, 13; *VCH Hampshire*, iv, p. 546.

⁹⁸ *CR 1234-1237*, p. 370.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*; *Oxfordshire Eyre 1241*, p. 87; *VCH Buckinghamshire*, iii, pp. 92-95.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*; Langley, *Hundred of Desborough*, p. 379.

¹⁰¹ Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', no.42.

important strategy employed by knightly families in the thirteenth century to expand their resources and mitigate the effects of adverse economic conditions.

As far as the economic situation was concerned, the knightly tenants of the honour of Wallingford provide a varied picture. Some families did indeed fall into debt and some were forced to sell their lands. On the other hand, other families, most notably the fitzEllises and the Rycotes went from strength to strength in the period, arguably finishing the thirteenth century wealthier than they began it. The Dayrells recovered their principal manor which at first sight appears to have been almost lost, but then flourished as a gentry family into modern times.

At this point it is necessary to consider the connection between financial difficulties and the transformation of knighthood. Central to Coss's view of the difficulties facing the knightly class in the thirteenth century is the inability of families to cope with the rising cost of knighthood.¹⁰² The elaborate ceremony that may have become attached to making knights at this level, the expensive horses and armour and the personnel needed to look after these were a great financial drain on families with limited income. This was especially so for those who were forced to rely on rents for income.¹⁰³ Carpenter argues that this was not so much of a problem as Coss suggests because families simply avoided economic difficulties by not taking up knighthood, sometimes returning to it later on, and that this entailed no decline in social status.¹⁰⁴ In this sense, the five families on which discussion has focussed were untypical in that all of them supported knights in 1300. Taking the tenants of the honour as a whole, however, many families did cease to take up knighthood. By the 1320s, there were only thirteen tenants

¹⁰² Coss, *Origins*, pp. 97-9.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 738.

of the honour can be proved to have been knights.¹⁰⁵ This compares with forty-three lay tenants of formerly knightly families holding by that time. Eight of these were addressed as esquires during the 1320s, while five were described simply as men at arms.¹⁰⁶

We must be cautious in interpreting this evidence, however. Among the non-knights in the 1320s were Henry Dayrell for whom no military rank is recorded, and Fulk (III) of Rycote who was an esquire.¹⁰⁷ Both of them came from families that supported knights in reign of Edward I. For some of these families then, although their absence from the ranks of knights in the early fourteenth century contributes to the impression of an overall decline in numbers of knights across the thirteenth century, they cannot be considered part of an early thirteenth century retreat from knighthood. The evidence of the honour seems to be at variance with the chronology of the transformation of knighthood as a whole. On the one hand this may be because tenants were on the whole wealthier than most knights. With the predominant size of holding within the honour of Wallingford consisting of a whole knight's fee or more, and based around well-established rural manors, we are considering primarily what Coss has described as 'the more solidly based figures of the later "gentry" type', and as such were not representative of all the knights in existence c.1200, many of whom were supported by lords, or drew their incomes overwhelmingly from rents.¹⁰⁸ The kind of petty knights found on juries of the 1220s and earlier that may account for much of the decline in numbers of knights, were represented within the honour of Wallingford only in the form of younger sons. Ellis fitzEllis, a younger brother of William (II) fitzEllis (d. 1227), who held land of his

¹⁰⁵ Knights with substantial wealth, Hugh le Despenser, Alan la Zouche, Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, and Henry Spygurnell, have been excluded from this figure.

¹⁰⁶ Terminology was still imprecise in this period, Coss, *Origins*, pp. 216-38.

¹⁰⁷ *Parliamentary Writs*, i, p. 593.

¹⁰⁸ Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, p. 307; quote from Coss, *The Knight*, p. 42.

brother, was a knight.¹⁰⁹ In later generations, the fitzEllises only maintained one knight in each generation.¹¹⁰

On the other hand, we must consider the reasons for several of the less wealthy families maintaining knights in the later thirteenth century but not in the early fourteenth, and what implications this has for our understanding of the retreat from knighthood. One possibility is that lordship played a part in ensuring that many knights who might otherwise have dropped out of knighthood, maintained it for a time. Coss raises the possibility of lords taking responsibility for knighting and equipping their men in the later thirteenth century, and has also drawn attention to the mass knighting ceremonies organised by Edward I.¹¹¹ It is conceivable that the earls of Cornwall wanted to maintain their men as knights.¹¹² Hugh de Druval was granted respite of knighthood in 1241, shortly after succeeding his father as lord of Goring.¹¹³ His manor, as we have seen had a large number of free tenants bringing him little cash rent, and he is known to have been in debt to the Jews in the following decade. Yet by the 1270s the lord of Goring was a knight, addressed in the hundred rolls and in charters as Sir Hugh de Druval.¹¹⁴ Support of the earl of Cornwall is one explanation for this. It also reflects the attitude to knighthood found by Carpenter and Faulkner; families opting in and out in different generations or at different times in their career. Faulkner, Carpenter and Polden in their analyses of large numbers of knightly families compare the situation in the first decades of the thirteenth century with the 1320s; the Wallingford evidence suggests that within

¹⁰⁹ *Ancient Deeds*, iv, p. A.7194.

¹¹⁰ For this phenomenon see, Coss, *The Knight*, p. 68.

¹¹¹ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 97-8, 104.

¹¹² It is argued in the next chapter that ties between the earls and the honour remained strong throughout the thirteenth century.

¹¹³ *CR 1237-1242*, p. 343.

¹¹⁴ *RH*, ii, p. 777; *CChR 1257-1300*, p. 209.

this period, there may be important variations in chronology that require further investigation.

The principal example of financial disaster among the tenants of the honour, that of the Chenduits, in some ways seems to be a good illustration of the kind of financial difficulty faced by members of the knightly class. Sir Stephen (I) Chenduit's sale of his lands is likely to have been the result of his borrowing to maintain a social standing he could not afford to maintain. He was a member of Richard, earl of Cornwall's affinity, and was probably often at court or elsewhere in the entourage of the earl. The Dunstable chronicler implied that he was an especially close companion, naming him as one of those accompanying Richard's newly knighted son back to England after the coronation in 1257.¹¹⁵ He fell into debt, it seems, due to over-spending to maintain himself at this level. His son, Sir Stephen (II) Chenduit succeeded him after many of the families' manors had been alienated but he, like his father remained a knight, illustrating the importance knighthood held for the family. On the other hand, it is perhaps telling that the case of the Chenduits, the one example of indebtedness leading to forced alienation, involved one of the wealthiest of the knightly tenants of the honour. While many of the families were lords of between one and three manors, the Chenduits had five or more. Many families with substantially smaller estates maintained knighthood apparently without facing financial ruin. The Chenduit case was operating on a much higher level. It was not his inability to sustain knighthood that caused his difficulties, but rather his inability, as a local knight, albeit a wealthy one, to maintain himself in the exalted circles of Earl Richard and the magnates. The fitzEllis, Druval, Rycote, Dayrell and many other

¹¹⁵ *Annales Monastici*, iii, p. 203; Harvey, *Medieval Oxfordshire Village*, p. 5.

families were able to successfully adopt strategies to maintain their economic position or in some cases develop it.

5.2 LIFE STYLE AND STATUS

Recent historians have drawn attention to changes in the culture of the knightly class, contrasting the fighting knights of the twelfth century for whom knighthood was a profession and was associated with service to a lord, with the high-status leaders of local society of the fourteenth century.¹¹⁶ Coss has described the emergence in the thirteenth century of a new, socially exclusive form of knighthood that accompanied the decline in number of knights and the confinement of knighthood by the fourteenth century to an elite group that was to form the upper rank of the 'gentry'.¹¹⁷ A central part of Coss's thesis is that the new elite knighthood shared a common ideology of chivalry that bound them together, and from which those below the rank of knight were excluded. Edward I and his successors encouraged this exclusiveness, he has argued, and exploited it to build closer direct links with local elites, and it is in the partnership of the crown and the new local elite together with the development of a collective self identity of this elite that the origins of the later medieval gentry can be detected.¹¹⁸

David Crouch has approached the subject from a different angle. He sees a change in contemporary society's conceptual understanding of itself; knighthood became

¹¹⁶ Coss, *Origins*, p. 30; Faulkner, 'Transformation of Knighthood,' p. 1.

¹¹⁷ Coss, *The Knight*, chs. 3-4; Coss, *Origins*, pp. 69; 104-6.

¹¹⁸ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 136-164.

identified with nobility between 1170 and 1220 as a result of intellectual trends of the twelfth century that encouraged categorisation and reflection on a changing society. He argues that ‘whereas twelfth and early thirteenth century society had no self conscious code of noble behaviour’, it did have, ‘a shared experience of behaviour which operated in much the same way as a code.’¹¹⁹ It was out of this, described by Crouch as a ‘habitus’ that contemporaries developed a code of chivalry based upon the ideal conduct of a knight. By the 1190s, English writers were conflating knighthood with nobility.¹²⁰ This was accompanied by a perception of the knight’s status as noble, which was a change from the earlier conception of knighthood as a function encompassing individuals of different social levels. With knighthood established as the frontier of nobility from c.1220, it became a conscious social class. Those who opted out of knighthood because of its increasing costs sought to define their own position in relation to it, leading to the eventual recognition of esquire below that of knight.¹²¹ The tenants of the honour of Wallingford allow us to examine the development of an elite group of knights in detail and explore the ways in which they displayed their status.

Tenants of the honour that remained knights can be shown to have been part of an aristocratic elite, adopting symbols and manners that this status implied. They arguably saw themselves less as servants of greater barons or the king, and more as independent lords in their own right, with a status and authority that was rooted in their family’s long-standing connection with a local area. They displayed this status through knighthood, surnames and heraldry, and through patronage of local chapels and parish churches.

¹¹⁹ Crouch, *Birth of Nobility*, p. 46.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 243–6.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 250.

The five families of Chenduit, Dayrell, Druval, fitzEllis and Rycote were all still headed by a knight in 1300, though as we have seen, by the 1320s, this was not so in the case of the Dayrells and Rycotes. That these families, and many other tenants of the honour continued to be knights, reflects not only their economic position, but also on their status and prestige. At the start of the thirteenth century, a knight seems to have been recognised by his community, but in most cases, there is little evidence of the ceremony, or of titles of distinction. William (II) fitzEllis (d. 1227) is only described as a knight in the legal records that record him performing the duties expected of a knight, such as in 1212 when he was one of four knights sent as viewers of bed-sickness.¹²² Knights are not distinguished in any of his charters, or on the witness lists of charters. The witnesses to a charter he issued in around 1200 in favour of St. Frideswide's priory, include a list of names, some of them, like William de Talemash, or William son of Robert, may well have been knights, while others, like the man described as 'Siward my esquire' were not.¹²³ By the mid-thirteenth century, knights had become more distinct, and those who were still knights were generally among the wealthier, more prominent members of the class – men like William (III) fitzEllis. Unlike his father, William (III) is distinguished as a knight in various charters to Bradenstoke Priory, and others contained in the Boarstall Cartulary, with witnesses arranged into lists of knights and non-knights, and knights often given the title *dominus* ('Sir').¹²⁴ These differences may relate in part to the differing practices of scribes and copyists, but the increasing use of deferential

¹²² *CRR*, vi, p. 287.

¹²³ *St. Frideswide*, p. 150.

¹²⁴ *Bradenstoke*, p. 47; *Boarstall*, pp. 82, 97, 99

language from the late twelfth century has been observed in wider ranging studies, and shows the way knighthood was gaining a more exclusive character.¹²⁵

A central aspect of noble status was lineage.¹²⁶ The importance of lineage to the tenants of the honour is much in evidence throughout the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The adoption of ‘fitzEllis’ as a patronymic surname illustrates this. In instances of the name when it first appears in the late twelfth century, it has the appearance of a descriptive by-name as opposed to a hereditary surname, though it may be telling that we do not know who the original Ellis was. In his charter granting the church of Waterperry to Oseney Abbey in 1175-8, William (I) describes himself as ‘Willelmus filius Elye,’ and when his son confirmed this grant in a charter of 1189, he described himself as ‘Willelmus filius Willelmi filii Helye’.¹²⁷ By the fourteenth century, William’s descendant Robert tended to be described in documents using the vernacular form, ‘Robert fitzEllis, knight’, with the surname rendered ‘le fiz Elis,’ ‘FitzElys,’ and other similar descriptions.¹²⁸ This shows the adoption of a surname by the family in the course of the century that would have identified them with a single male line and stressed their sense of lineage and pride in it.

The Dayrell, Druval and Chenduit names were all well established by 1200, having certainly been used as early as the 1150s and which probably went back even further. The names Druval and Dayrell (de Airel) were both apparently Norman toponymic surnames suggesting that these families had an awareness of and pride in their pre-Conquest Norman origins, and possibly even that the surnames were in existence

¹²⁵ Crouch, *Image*, p. 148.

¹²⁶ Keen, *Chivalry*, p. 151-9.

¹²⁷ *Oseney*, iv, pp. 373, 375

¹²⁸ *CR 1323-1327*, p. 155; *St Frideswide*, p. 171, 152.

from the eleventh century. Indeed this was notably common among tenants of the honour of Wallingford with the families of Mara (or de la Mare), Foliot, Basset, Pippard, Chausey, Danvers, Morin, Malet and Valognes all using Norman names, while the surname, Huscarl, appears to have Old English origins. The strength of the identification of surname with lineage is demonstrated by the use of the surname Waleis by the cadet branch of the Druval family that descended from Ralph, the younger son of William de Druval who held the manor of Goring in 1154.

Other Wallingford families such as those of Rycote, Wheatfield, Hedsor, Tidmarsh, Wormsley, Chesterton and Sulham, used the name of their manor as a toponymic surname. This was especially common among the lesser families who held only one manor which the Rycotes, Wheatfields, Hedsors and Wormsleys did. The use of this kind of surname combined the identity of the family with the lordship of the patrimony in an effectively ambiguous manner, inextricably linking individual lord of the manor, family, and estate in a single identifier. This was especially evocative when the repetition of Christian names was also adopted by families; the lords of Rycote, for example, for a century and a half from 1200 were called ‘Fulk of Rycote’.¹²⁹

Patterns of adopting first names were also as indicative of a concern for continuity of lineage as were those of surnames. In addition to the Rycotes’ use of the name Fulk, all Druval lords of the thirteenth century were named Hugh de Druval. The head of the fitzEllis family was named William across three generations from the 1170s through to the early 1270s.¹³⁰ The Ralph de Chenduit who died in 1242 was at least the third of that

¹²⁹ Carpenter, *Struggle for Mastery*, p. 397.

¹³⁰ The date of William (III) fitzEllis’s death is uncertain. He had been dead for at least three years in 1275 when his lands were occupied by his son-in-law and neighbour, John fitzNigel, for life with reversion to the heirs of Thomas fitzEllis. *Boarstall*, p. 96.

name in his family and the Chenduit family may have been descended from a Domesday tenant of the count of Mortain called Ralph.¹³¹ Ralph (III) Chenduit's son, Stephen named his son Stephen also. And the Dayrell family was headed by three Ralphs and three Henrys during the period under discussion. The extremely common adoption of the same first names in successive generations confirms the importance placed by the knightly class across this period, on patrimonial descent.

One very significant manifestation of the importance of lineage, and its association with nobility and status that developed in this period was the spread of heraldry.¹³² The origins of heraldry go back to the twelfth century, but it is only in the thirteenth century that it had diffused through society to the level of the knights.¹³³ By this time it had developed a formal language and logic of its own, and was at first closely related to knighthood.¹³⁴ By the fourteenth century, hereditary coats of arms 'gave symbolic expression to a contemporarily accepted association of blood, social pre-eminence and military function,'¹³⁵ thus marking off the noble bearers of coats-of-arms from their non-noble counterparts. Heraldry was thus invested with great prestige and was displayed on clothes, buckles, manuscripts, buildings and effigies, proclaiming the status of the family involved.¹³⁶

At the social level of the knightly tenants of the honour of Wallingford, detecting the adoption and use of coats of arms in the thirteenth century is difficult as the survival of rolls of arms is much sparser than in the fourteenth century, in itself a reflection of the

¹³¹ *VCH Hertford*, ii, pp. 264-273.

¹³² Coss, 'Knighthood, Heraldry and Social Exclusion', p. 39.

¹³³ Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, p. 220.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

¹³⁵ Keen, *Origins of the English Gentleman*, p. 12.

¹³⁶ Coss, *The Knight*, p. 86.

growing prominence of heraldry in society. The earliest surviving information about heraldry used by Wallingford tenants unsurprisingly relates to families that were of a higher status or who at least had other direct links to central government. Drew de Barentyn, who held the manor of Chalgrove in Oxfordshire is the earliest Wallingford tenant recorded in a roll of arms, with the blazon, *Sable three eagles displayed Or*, appearing in Glover's Roll which dates from c.1255.¹³⁷ Robert Malet's arms, *Sable three buckles Argent*, appear on the Herald's and Dering Rolls of the 1270s.¹³⁸ The arms of Ralph Pippard, *Argent two bars Azure and on a canton of the last a pierced cinquefoil Or*, were recorded on a number of late thirteenth century rolls of arms, the earliest being Segar's Roll dating from c. 1282.¹³⁹ Sampson Foliot's arms, *Argent, two lions passant guardant in pale Gules*, and the *Azure two lions passant guardant in pale Or* arms of Robert Barry both also appear on Segar's Roll.¹⁴⁰ Drew de Barentyn was a knight of the royal household and descendant of an important minister of King John, while Ralph Pippard was a wealthy minor baron rather than a simple knightly tenant. Robert Malet, Sampson Foliot and Robert Barry on the other hand were the heads of important local families. Sampson Foliot held Fritwell and a number of other manors in Oxfordshire and was also a tenant of the honour of Wallingford for Draycot Foliot and Ogbourne St Andrew in Wiltshire. Robert Barry held the manor of Stanton Barry (Stantonbury) in Buckinghamshire of the honour of Wallingford and represented Buckinghamshire at the parliaments of 1297, 1307, 1312.¹⁴¹ Robert Malet held the Wallingford manor of Quainton in Buckinghamshire and was in the retinue of Edmund, earl of Cornwall,

¹³⁷ *Dictionary of British Arms*, p. 167; *English Medieval Rolls of Arms*, ed. Mitchell, p. 27.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 59, 88.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 137.

¹⁴¹ *VCH Buckinghamshire*, iv, 462-6.

serving him as steward of the honour of Wallingford for a time.¹⁴² The earliest record of the fitzEllis coat-of-arms, *argent a bend between six fleur de lis gules* (see Figures 7 and 8, below), is in a roll of arms of the reign of Edward II, Sir William le Neve's Second Roll, and appears also in a roll of arms of 1350.¹⁴³ By the early fourteenth century, there is evidence of the Huscarl family using a distinctive coat of arms featuring three Danish axes in reference to their name (*Azure three axes Argent*) which is recorded on the Carlisle Roll of 1334.¹⁴⁴



Figure 7. The Arms of the fitzEllis Family of Waterperry, Oxfordshire



Figure 8. The Arms of the Huscarl Family of Beddington, Surrey

¹⁴² PRO: E 36/57, f. 31v.

¹⁴³ *Dictionary of British Arms*, p. 386; *English Medieval Rolls of Arms*, ed. Mitchell, p. 57.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 452; *Dictionary of British Arms*, p. 13.

It is possible that some of these families were using heraldry earlier but no record has been preserved. On the other hand, the fact that only the wealthiest and most well connected of the knightly tenants of the honour begin to appear in rolls of arms from the 1280s onwards and that less wealthy families begin to appear on such rolls later on in the reigns of Edward II and Edward III seems to confirm that this way of expressing noble status was only just beginning to reach this level of society as it diffused downwards through society from magnate circles. Heraldry was an important way of projecting family identity, as the pun on the fitzEllis arms and the Danish hatchets on the Huscarl arms show (see Figure 7 and Figure 8), but for these members of the local elite, this was not until the very end of our period and the early fourteenth century.

The knightly families of the honour of Wallingford also displayed their status and noble identity as well as their spiritual interests through their patronage of parish churches and local chapels. The earliest evidence of Wallingford knightly tenants becoming involved in such activity concerns the Dayrell family. In a charter datable to 1174x1198, Robert Dayrell, lord of Lillingstone Dayrell and Hanworth, granted to Luffield Priory a certain place in his wood of Westbury in Lillingstone where a chapel dedicated to St Thomas of Canterbury had been constructed.¹⁴⁵ It seems likely that it was he that constructed the chapel. Lillingstone already had a parish church and Luffield Priory was also in the parish.¹⁴⁶ Whether the building of this chapel was Robert Dayrell's initiative is uncertain as is his motivation. The cult of Thomas Becket spread fast in the late twelfth century and was adopted by rulers across Western Christendom including King Henry II and his Angevin successors.

¹⁴⁵ *Luffield Charters*, ii, nos. 371, 372.

¹⁴⁶ *VCH Buckinghamshire*, iv, pp. 187-191.

Another instance of chapel building is found at the manor of Rycote. We have even less information about the dating and motivation of this than of the Lillingstone one. The chapel that survives at Rycote was built in the fifteenth century, though the font is thought to be a re-cut one dating from the twelfth century.¹⁴⁷ The earliest evidence of a chapel at Rycote comes from the proof of age inquest taken in 1317 to prove that Fulk (III) of Rycote, son of Fulk (II) was of full age and therefore eligible to enter into his inheritance.¹⁴⁸ In this document, a number of witnesses testified that the younger Fulk was born on 16 November 1295 at Rycote ‘and was baptized in the chapel there, and Master Hugh, rector of the church of Albury, Fulk son of William of Draycot, and Joan de Rale, lifted him from the sacred font.’ It is uncertain when this chapel was built but it is significant that the manor of Rycote had its own chapel, separate from the parish church at Great Haseley. It is not clear whether this was a private chapel like the ones Crouch and others have observed were increasingly being built by members of the knightly class in the thirteenth century partly in imitation of great magnates who had long built chapels in their castles, and which was therefore regarded as a symbol of status.¹⁴⁹ The fact that there was a font in the Rycote chapel, however, would have been unusual as bishops were generally keen for private chapels not to replace the parish church. Bishop Robert Grosseteste of Lincoln, in whose diocese Rycote lay, when granting a licence to John Hansard of South Kelsey for a chapel laid down strict conditions, among them that it should have no font.¹⁵⁰ This could imply that the Rycote chapel’s existence, rather than being a private chapel serving the Rycote family, was primarily to serve the settlement at

¹⁴⁷ Pevsner, *Oxfordshire*, p. 747.

¹⁴⁸ *CIPM*, vi, no. 123.

¹⁴⁹ Crouch, *Image*, pp. 269–270.

¹⁵⁰ Saul, ‘Gentry and the Parish’, p. 246.

Rycote which was two miles away from the parish church at Great Haseley. This function too, however, would no doubt have served to emphasise lordship and status. The chapel at Rycote may have served as focus for the community of Rycote tenants, and therefore have provided the lords of the manor with many of the opportunities for secular display that might have proved difficult at the parish church of Great Haseley which was situated at the centre of lordship of the baronial Pippard family.

The connection between the manorial lord and the parish church was long-standing; from the initial development of the manorial economy and its associated growth in nucleated settlements and a seigneurial class, the development of the parish church was an important part of this development.¹⁵¹ The relationship was not entirely symbiotic. As Nigel Saul has pointed out with reference to the later medieval gentry, the central focus for such people was the manor rather than the parish and in many cases the geographical boundaries of manor and parish were not co-extensive.¹⁵² Nevertheless, parish churches served an important social as well as religious function, emphasising the secular hierarchy, as Saul has shown in the case of Sir William de Etchingham of Etchingham in Sussex, who, in the late fourteenth century, rebuilt the parish church of Etchingham with an elaborate system of heraldic decoration that served to ‘bear visual witness to his family’s place in the pecking order of local society’.¹⁵³ It was here that the lord of the manor could be seen by his tenants, and the liturgy and seating arrangements would have served to distinguish him. And in his building work, he was able to make a permanent mark on his locality, adding to his family’s sense of lineage and association with the area.

¹⁵¹ Blair, *Early Medieval Surrey*, pp. 160-161.

¹⁵² Saul, ‘Gentry and the Parish’, p. 245.

¹⁵³ Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*, pp. 152-3, 159-60, quote at p. 160.

The modern survival of a great deal of architecture of thirteenth century style in the parish church of St Nicholas in Lillingstone Dayrell suggests the contribution of several generations of Dayrell lords.¹⁵⁴ The Dayrells held the advowson, giving them the right to present a candidate of their own choice to the benefice of the church.¹⁵⁵ This also gave them responsibility for the maintenance of the chancel as well as the tower, nave and other parts of the church that were the responsibility of the laity of the parish.¹⁵⁶ Architectural evidence dates the chancel, the tower, and two of the windows, to the early to mid-thirteenth century, while the east window is a design of c. 1280. Also of late thirteenth-century date are the nave aisles, the south door, some unusual wall arcading on the south side of the church, and what Pevsner describes as a ‘curious tomb-recess-cum-Easter Sepulchre’. There is nothing to specifically link any of this work to the Dayrells or to any other individual patrons, but the date attributable to these substantial improvements to an existing early Norman church, suggest substantial amounts of money were spent by the Dayrell family on their parish church, making it a larger and more impressive building.

The fitzEllis family, as lords of Waterperry, appear to have been very active in making improvements to the parish church of Waterperry over many generations. The church, unlike the Rycotes’ parish church, was located adjoining the fitzEllises’ residence, though unlike the Dayrell’s church at Lillingstone, the advowson of Waterperry church was held by the monks of Oseney Abbey.¹⁵⁷ The chancel arch dates from before the Conquest. Extensive rebuilding was undertaken in the late twelfth

¹⁵⁴ Pevsner, *Buckinghamshire*, p. 431.

¹⁵⁵ *Rotuli Hugonis de Welles*, ii, p. 90: Henry Dayrell presented Laurence Dayrell, presumably a relative, who was to be sent to the schools to study.

¹⁵⁶ Nigel Saul, personal communication.

¹⁵⁷ *Rotuli Roberti Grosseteste*, p. 478.

century when a new nave aisle was built on the south side and the church was extended at the west end.¹⁵⁸ All this work took place in the decades after the fitzEllis family gained possession of the manor of Waterperry following William (I) fitzEllis's marriage to Emma of Waterperry. The chancel was built during the thirteenth century, and in 1273,¹⁵⁹ the church was rededicated to St Mary, though this was probably the responsibility of the monks of Oseney as holders of the advowson, rather than William (III) and Robert fitzEllis. The fitzEllises are more likely to have been involved in work on the nave, which was rebuilt in around 1300 and widened on the north side.¹⁶⁰ Much work was done at Oakley in the early fourteenth century when the east end of the church saw a major remodelling including the building of a new chancel and chancel arch that survive today.¹⁶¹ Robert fitzEllis was lord of Oakley from around 1300 until his death in 1346, though the advowson was held by the king, so the role of Robert in this work is uncertain. The Dayrells and the fitzEllises, as wealthy knights therefore appear to have been involved in making improvements to the parish churches that served the communities over which they were lords, and they did this over several generations and for over a hundred years. Religious patronage of this kind, as well as having a spiritual purpose would also have had an important social impact. The fitzEllis and Dayrell lords, and possibly also the Rycotes, were perhaps appropriating the churches that lay at the centre of their patrimonies, and which served their tenants, and treating them, if on a smaller scale, in a way similar to that by which magnates of an earlier generation had

¹⁵⁸ Pevsner, *Oxfordshire*, p. 827.

¹⁵⁹ Todd, *Waterperry Church*, p. 6; *VCH Oxfordshire*, v, pp. 306-7.

¹⁶⁰ Pevsner, *Oxfordshire*, p. 827.

¹⁶¹ Pevsner, *Buckinghamshire*, p. 586-7.

treated great monasteries; as seigneurial institutions that united a lordship community and which was closely associated with the identity of the lord's family.

This becomes especially clear in building-work done on the church at Waterperry by the fitzEllis family in the fourteenth century. From the present-day architectural condition of the church, it would appear that a whole south aisle was added to the church housing the effigy of a knight who is most probably Sir Robert fitzEllis who died in 1346. It is likely that Robert had founded a chantry there, supporting a priest to celebrate Mass regularly for the benefit of his soul; a practice that was becoming increasingly common from the late fourteenth century following the church's formulation of the doctrine of Purgatory.¹⁶² The armour the knight in the effigy is wearing is of a mid-fourteenth-century style and traces of the fitzEllis family coat-of-arms have been detected on the now well-worn shield.¹⁶³ Monuments such as this gave powerful visual expression to the way in which families saw themselves and their place in society. The very fact that such a large and ornate monument was built in a small country church suggests that it projected an image of the family's status as lords of Waterperry. Robert, if it is he, is depicted as a knight in armour, again showing the importance of his status, and by extension that of his descendants. Furthermore, it has been suggested that that this effigy was the product of the same sculptor who made the effigy of John of Eltham in Westminster Abbey.¹⁶⁴ If this were so, it is striking evidence of a local knight maintaining living standards equivalent, if on a smaller scale, to the upper aristocracy. Tombs in general were becoming increasingly common among gentry families by the

¹⁶² Burgess, 'Strategies for Eternity', pp. 2-3; Saul, 'Gentry and the Parish', p. 252; Nigel Saul, personal communication.

¹⁶³ Todd, *Waterperry Church*, pp. 9-11.

¹⁶⁴ See Southwick, 'The Armoured Effigy of Prince John of Eltham in Westminster Abbey and Some Closely Related Military Monuments', *Church Monuments 2* (1987).

middle of the fourteenth century and to an extent demonstrate the increasingly exclusive terms in which they saw themselves.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, it is also possible to see a great deal of continuity between the building of the fitzEllis monument in the 1340s and the apparent patronage of local churches by the fitzEllises and other knightly tenants of the honour through the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

So the knights of the honour displayed their status visually; they also showed their position in society in their way of life. Each of the knightly tenants was the head of a household that included family and servants employed in a variety of capacities. Information about the composition of the households of the knights in this period is scarce but for a few isolated references. Two charters of William (I) fitzEllis datable to c.1200, preserved in the cartulary of the monastery of St Frideswide at Oxford, were witnessed by Siward, William's esquire (*Siwardo armigero meo*).¹⁶⁶ This is the only direct reference to a member of the household of any of the families in this period, but from this we know that William, as an important county knight was accompanied on his business by an esquire. The inquest of 1317 to prove that Fulk (III) of Rycote was of age provides a much more detailed picture of a knightly household nearly a century after William fitzEllis's charters.¹⁶⁷ In 1294, when Fulk was born, his father Fulk (II) of Rycote employed his nephew, John de Scalebroke as his squire. Fulk (II) also had a steward, William of Draycot that is in Tiddington, just over a mile to the north of Rycote. We also learn that this William named his son Fulk, and that Fulk of Draycot acted as a god-parent to the new-born Fulk of Rycote, raising him from the sacred font, suggesting a

¹⁶⁵ Coss, 'Knighthood, heraldry and social exclusion', p. 47.

¹⁶⁶ *St Frideswide*, ii, nos. 862, 865.

¹⁶⁷ *CIPM*, vi, no. 123.

close relationship between the lord of Rycote and his steward.¹⁶⁸ A number of other servants of Fulk of Rycote are mentioned including his clerk, William de Rofford. At the end of the thirteenth century, therefore, it is clear that a knight like Fulk of Rycote stood at the head of a large household. Although the evidence is insufficient to say for certain, it is likely that squires, clerks and stewards accompanied their knightly lords when the latter travelled on business. They too may have been accompanied by servants of their own; William of Draycot had at least one servant with him when Fulk (III) of Rycote was baptised. All this would have provided a knight with a miniature retinue that would again have visually proclaimed his status and importance to onlookers.

One way in which at least some of the knights of the honour showed their status was through the activities they participated in with their households and wider retinues. The baptism of Fulk of Rycote's son in the chapel at Rycote before a witnessing household hints at a shared liturgical life. Indeed, there is evidence elsewhere that knightly households did have an important role as religious communities. The Psalter commissioned by Sir Geoffrey Luttrell in the fourteenth century, as Peter Coss has recently shown, depicted the household in just this way, with Sir Geoffrey shown in one image seated with his household in a manner recalling Christ at the Last Supper and emphasising the divinely sanctioned role of *paterfamilias*.¹⁶⁹

In addition to a shared religious life, the knights also appear to have gone hunting, perhaps accompanied by their small household retinues, or with other fellow knights. Matthew Paris described Ralph Chenduit chasing about with dogs and huntsmen in sight

¹⁶⁸ For baptism and god-parents, see Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*, p. 137.

¹⁶⁹ Coss, *Foundations*, p. 141.

of the abbot and convent of St Alban's.¹⁷⁰ Ralph was apparently being deliberately provocative but this description strongly implies that he kept dogs specifically for the purpose of hunting. Grants of free warren such as that received from the king by Hugh de Druval of Goring in 1254 gave holders control over hunting in their demesne lands and were generally restricted to magnates and *curiales*, with only a few being granted to men of knightly rank.¹⁷¹ In 1249, Sampson Foliot made a fine to the king to have a warren at his Wallingford manor of Chilton Foliat in Wiltshire.¹⁷² Hunting was ubiquitous among the nobility of the period with kings, earls, bishops and abbots all well documented as taking an interest.¹⁷³ It was an activity that involved great expense and the employment of specialists.¹⁷⁴ Hunting had great symbolic social and cultural significance, being associated with physical prowess, masculinity, and by extension, nobility and social status. It is significant then that at least some knightly tenants of the honour of Wallingford indulged in the sport were equipped to do it with horses and dogs and men to look after them. This would have given them a common interest with the higher aristocracy and have associated them with royalty and nobility. The head of a group of men hunting in this way would not fail to impress upon spectators and servants alike, his status and social significance.

In some cases it is possible to learn something of the way the knights interacted with those around them on a very detailed level. Surviving information about the personality of individuals at this level of society is very rare, yet some sources do reveal aspects of this. The 1317 proof of age inquest shows something of Fulk (II) of Rycote's

¹⁷⁰ *Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, ed. and trans. Vaughan, p. 76.

¹⁷¹ *CPR 1247-1258*, p. 325. Crook, 'Charters of Free Warren', pp. 33-48, p. 37.

¹⁷² *CFR 1248-1249*, 33/348.

¹⁷³ Crouch, *Image*, pp. 305-310.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

personal style. When his wife Margaret gave birth to a son, he presented his steward with a pair of gloves, and sent messengers with the news out to fellow knights in neighbouring villages. In these actions he was celebrating the continuation of the Rycote lineage and showing noble largesse. Much more extensive and unusual is the narrative account of Ralph (III) de Chenduit included by the great thirteenth century chronicler, Matthew Paris, in his *Gesta Abbatum*. Paris describes him thus: ‘heavy and robust and his whole body was built like a bull’s for strength.’¹⁷⁵ Matthew’s account also provides us with what the chronicler presents as an example of Ralph’s speech; ‘one day in the royal palace at Westminster, laughing, [Ralph] said derisively, “the monks of St Albans have excommunicated me so much that I have become so heavy and fat that I can hardly get into my saddle”’.¹⁷⁶ This vivid account of the appearance, personality and sense of humour of Ralph (III) is related in the context of Ralph being one of the ‘extremely powerful enemies’ of St Alban’s who disputed their right to free warren at Stanmore in Middlesex, which Abbot John successfully defended.¹⁷⁷ Paris relates how Ralph’s premature death in 1243 was ‘the manifest punishment of the avenging St Alban’, and so his account is understandably unfavourable. Nevertheless, Matthew provides a plausible description of Ralph: a heavy and robust man built like a bull. Ralph is described as riding armed on a valuable armoured horse at the head of a contingent of armed men, on one occasion, as we have seen, chasing about with dogs and huntsmen in the sight of the abbot and convent, and on another occasion striking Ralph of Dunham, one of the abbot’s bearers. Even Ralph’s light-hearted comments about being excommunicated may be an accurate account of events, perhaps recorded by Paris as he regarded the remarks as

¹⁷⁵ Paris, *Gesta Abbatum*, i, p. 319; *Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, ed. and trans. Vaughan, p. 76.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 73.

particularly scandalous. Of course these words may be Matthew Paris's view of the sort of attitude he would expect from a man such as Ralph Chenduit. But if the former, it reveals an interesting aspect of Ralph Chenduit's character and his religious attitudes. As Paris says, when he was taken seriously ill while riding home from London, he recognised his approaching death as divine punishment and sought forgiveness from St Alban, offering the monks compensation. Matthew Paris therefore presents Ralph (III) Chenduit as a wealthy, powerful and violent man with worldly interests in expensive armour and horses, in hunting, and in making jokes at the expense of St Alban's. This description provides us with an almost unique view of the personality of a knight in this period. Of course, it is unclear how representative Ralph was even if this was an accurate representation. Yet it is an account which complements the other evidence we have examined for the way in which knights of the honour of Wallingford perceived their position in society.

The evidence of the tenants of the honour has shown how some tenant families developed an elite aristocratic identity in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries through the adoption of styles of living and attitudes that mirrored, on a smaller scale, those of the upper nobility. The maintenance of knighthood was one aspect of this, helping to display the status of an individual alongside other elements, but it seems not to have separated those holding it from those who ceased to hold it. Families, such as the Druvals went in and out of it, while those such as the Rycotes, Dayrells, together with the Wheatfields, Barrys, Darches and others apparently maintained their status in the early fourteenth century without taking up the rank. Two of the families for whom coats of arms are detectable in the thirteenth century, the Barentyns and the Barrys, for whom

arms were recorded in c.1255 and 1282 respectively, were not headed by knights by the 1320s.

In a variety of ways, both through behaviour and visual display, the families studied here can be seen as part of an aristocratic elite. The uneven nature of the evidence makes it difficult to say how new these developments were; there appear to have been both changes and continuities across the period as a whole. Overall it seems that the methods of displaying status may have become more elaborate but it is not clear whether this status was new in the thirteenth century. The next two sections examine the roles played by knights in society, on which much of their status depended, but also which they held as a result of this status.

5.3 THE MILITARY ROLE OF KNIGHTS

Tenants of the honour of Wallingford held their lands in return for military service, while the aesthetic of the chivalric and noble culture of which they were a part was military in its character.¹⁷⁸ The use of coats of arms, the growing significance and popularity of tournaments, and depictions of knights armed and mounted in contemporary illustrations testify to this. Yet the extent to which knights were actively involved in warfare cannot be assumed and is an important question that must be answered. At any one time, a knight might be too old, physically or mentally disabled or in other ways incapable of serving in person, and the payment of scutage had long been an alternative method of rendering service in Angevin England. There is also the possibility that men may not

¹⁷⁸ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 20-36.

have wanted to participate in warfare, but rather preferred to devote their energies to the management of their estates, the pursuit of local affairs, or even, the business of local government. Indeed, R.F. Treharne argued that an important part of the development of the knightly class by the thirteenth century was its increased connection with the civilian world; they were ‘essentially men of peace and of affairs’ he argued, though they were also trained warriors.¹⁷⁹ This concept of a civilianised knightly class has been seen in the context of the re-militarisation of the gentle-born in the reign of Edward I.¹⁸⁰ The question of the involvement of knights of the honour of Wallingford in actual fighting is therefore important to consider. Among some of the families who were tenants of the honour of Wallingford, there is evidence of a high level of military activity.

From the start of the thirteenth century, there survive among royal records, summonses issued to tenants of the honour among others, to serve in the king’s army or to defend the castle of Wallingford. On 14 April 1215 King John ordered Wallingford knights Hugh de Druval, Walter Foliot, Richard Morin, Amaury son of Robert, Geoffrey de Chausy, Thomas Huscarl, Roger de Stanford, Geoffrey of Appleton, William Basset and Geoffrey son of Angot, to come with horse and armour to stand guard in the castle of Wallingford until ordered otherwise.¹⁸¹ The following month on 2 May, the king ordered Fulk of Rycote, Richard de Camville, Thurstan Basset, Robert fitzAmaury, Henry de Taydon, Robert de Valognes, Hugh de la Mare, Robert of Harpenden, and William Darches to send one knight with a horse and arms to Wallingford for the defence of the

¹⁷⁹ Treharne, ‘The Knights in the Period of Reform’, p. 278.

¹⁸⁰ Coss, ‘Knighthood, Heraldry and Social Exclusion’, p. 43; Ayton, ‘English Armies in the Fourteenth Century’, p. 29.

¹⁸¹ *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, i, p. 132.

castle.¹⁸² As the knights of the honour held their lands in return for military service, this is to be expected. Yet summonses alone do not alone suggest that the recipient actually served in person, or even whether he responded to the summons at all, though the wording of the first writ expects that castle-guard would be rendered in person. It is possible that some did not attend at all in the spring of 1215 while much of the baronage was in rebellion; as we shall see below, there is evidence that some Wallingford tenants had sympathies with John's opponents at this time.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, the central purpose of an honour was as a military unit. Crouch argues that castle guard would have been a significant part of knightly life in great honours of the early twelfth century, but that this arrangement 'must have eroded fairly soon, with the probable exception of castles in the Welsh March, where warfare was more frequent.'¹⁸⁴ Castle guard still seems to have been demanded of Wallingford tenants in the early thirteenth century. Knights of the honour held their land and in return were expected to contribute to the defence of the castle and serve in the king's army.

Military summonses and the obligation to do knight service do not demonstrate the level of actual fighting undertaken by a knight of course. For this, we must look elsewhere. There is a great deal of evidence of knights of the honour of Wallingford performing service in royal armies during the thirteenth century. At least twenty of the honour's knights served in the force taken to Ireland by King John in 1210, which is discussed below.¹⁸⁵ There is also evidence of knights serving in royal armies throughout the century. Royal letters patent of 1230 reveal that Ralph (III) Chenduit served in that

¹⁸² Ibid., i, p. 134.

¹⁸³ See below, p. 340.

¹⁸⁴ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 24-5.

¹⁸⁵ *Rotuli de Liberate*, pp. 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 192, 198. See below, p. 342.

year's expedition to France.¹⁸⁶ Ralph was again issued with a personal summons to serve in 1242, though it is uncertain whether he served that time.¹⁸⁷ In 1254 Hugh de Druval received a grant of free warren from King Henry III in letters patent issued at Bordeaux, suggesting Hugh was serving on the Gascon expedition at the time.¹⁸⁸ Hugh was also recorded as being present among those who assembled at Chester in August of 1257 for the king's military expedition to Wales that year. Among the large number of men that served on this occasion were other Wallingford tenants, Drew de Barentyn, Sampson Foliot and William de Huntercombe.¹⁸⁹ In March 1264, William (III) fitzEllis was summoned to join the royalist army at Oxford, though it is not clear whether or not he answered this summons. In the summer of 1298, Sir Robert Barry, Sir William de Harpeden, Sir Thomas de Cowdray and Sir Robert Malet, at least, were among the tenants of the honour present in Edward I's army in Scotland that fought at the battle of Falkirk.¹⁹⁰ In the fourteenth century, Robert fitzEllis was active in military service and there is evidence of him serving in Ireland with Roger Mortimer in 1316, and in 1337, he travelled abroad in the service of the earl of Salisbury.¹⁹¹ Evidence of military activity among tenants of the honour in the thirteenth century is therefore patchy, but it appears that the community of the honour of Wallingford contained at least some active fighting knights throughout the period under discussion.

Away from formal military service, there is much to suggest that Wallingford knights used violence in pursuit of their own local interests, and indeed that violence was

¹⁸⁶ *CPR 1225-1232*, p. 357.

¹⁸⁷ *CR 1237-1242*, pp. 527-8.

¹⁸⁸ *CPR 1247-1258*, p. 325.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 597.

¹⁹⁰ *Scotland in 1298*, ed. Gough, pp. 50, 220, 187, 247.

¹⁹¹ *CPR 1313-1317*, pp. 277, 345; *Treaty Rolls 1337-1339*, p. 152.

part of knightly identity.¹⁹² The only eye-witness description of one of the knights of the honour of Wallingford to survive, Matthew Paris's 1243 account of Ralph Chenduit, presents us with a picture of Ralph armed and mounted on a valuable armoured horse leading at the head of a contingent of armed men.¹⁹³ Legal records show that land disputes could involve the use of force and provide accounts of acts of violence. In 1242/3 William (III) fitzEllis was one of twelve people accused of having entered the wood of the prior of Harmondsworth 'by force and with arms without licence'.¹⁹⁴ Earlier in 1231, in a dispute between Hugh (III) de Druval and William de Sutton, apparently Hugh's step-father, over seven hides of land at Goldor and Clare in Pyrton, Oxfordshire, William de Sutton complained that a group of seven men led by Hugh de Druval invaded his land on horses, struck him and dragged him about before entering his house and seising his palfrey and rents.¹⁹⁵ Those accused were Hugh de Druval, Robert son of John, Henry the sergeant of Hugh Druval, John Pirun, John Huttot, Roger son of Ralph and William Judas. A third example of such activity comes from the late thirteenth century when in October 1281, the king pardoned Ralph Dayrell and twenty-six named others, some of whom can be identified as neighbours and tenants of Ralph, for the death of Master Peter de Radnor.¹⁹⁶ Local disputes between landowners appear to have been occasions when knights used violent means to achieve their ends, often mounted, wearing armour, and with an armed retinue. Ralph (III) Chenduit and Hugh (III) de Druval both served in royal armies during their careers which may be significant, but it is clear that the use of force was not confined to warfare but was also an aspect of life in peacetime.

¹⁹² For violence among the Angevin 'gentry', see Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses*, pp. 59-68.

¹⁹³ Paris, *Gesta Abbatum*, i, p. 319; *Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, ed. and trans. Vaughan, p. 76.

¹⁹⁴ *CRR*, xvii, no. 788.

¹⁹⁵ *CRR*, xiv, no. 1473.

¹⁹⁶ *CPR 1272-1281*, p. 460.

5.4 INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The period 1154-1300 has been seen as crucial in the development of the English state, which saw the birth of the English Common Law, and the increasing involvement in central politics of an emerging gentry class. All this, it has been argued, culminated in the formation of a polity based around king, nobility and gentry that came to be represented in parliament. It is to the increasing experience in, and knowledge of, the procedures of local government that J.C. Holt attributed the growing influence and political consciousness of the knightly class evident in the 1215 rebellion against King John.¹⁹⁷ Coss's recent study of the origins of the gentry has provided a more nuanced picture of the role of knights in government, and questioned the existing dominant historiography on this subject. He draws a distinction between the kind of public role required of knights and other free men in the legal procedures of Angevin government on the one hand, and the employment of members of local society by the king as commissioners on the other. Coss argues that the partnership between the crown and local society, formed as a result of such commissions, which eventually saw royal government effectively devolved to local landowners, was a defining aspect of the later medieval and early modern gentry, setting them apart from the seigneurial or knightly class that had gone before.¹⁹⁸ With this distinction in mind, we must ask what role the tenants of the honour of Wallingford played in local society and its government in this period.

¹⁹⁷ Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 60.

¹⁹⁸ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 165-201.

5.4.1 The Honour

One factor that was important with regard to the governmental role of these knights and which deserves consideration is the honour of Wallingford itself. It was shown in a previous chapter that in addition to being a feudal estate, the honour was an important jurisdictional area.¹⁹⁹ The honour had a system of government that amounted to a parallel administration, and which included many of the elements of county administration. The steward of the honour fulfilled many of the roles of a sheriff within the territory of the honour. Such an arrangement arguably served to emphasise the governmental role of the honour's knightly tenants. The principle that an honour was administered by a lord through his steward in counsel with his court was well established. As new royal legal procedures developed in the later twelfth century and were applied to the honour, so the knights of the honour became involved in the administration of the liberty, as office-holders and as jurors. Everything that has been said about the role of knights in the government of their counties could also be said for the government of the honour. So in 1184, when a dispute arose over the advowson of the church of Watlington, a panel of 'knights of the county of Oxford and clergy of the deanery and knights of the honour of Wallingford' were summoned to determine the case.²⁰⁰ Similarly, the lord of the manor of Chesterton in Oxfordshire called the coroner of Oxfordshire to deal with a thief who had fled to the church there sometime before 1260.²⁰¹ Representatives of neighbouring villis within the honour were summoned so that the coroner could make the thief abjure

¹⁹⁹ See chapter 4.

²⁰⁰ *Oseney*, iv, no. 385.

²⁰¹ *Select Cases*, pp. 107-8.

the realm. In addition to these communal responsibilities, there is also much evidence of knightly tenants of the honour serving as stewards and bailiffs within the honour's administration.

The case of the honour of Wallingford suggests the possibility of substantial continuity in the role of knights in government across the period as a whole. Local justice within the honour had long been a collective matter for the court of knightly tenants acting collectively or as office holders. The growing involvement of knights in judicial procedures and office holding from the Angevin period onwards was in some ways a continuation of this role.²⁰² The important change was in the points of contact between the centre and locality, and the changes in power structures that took place.

5.4.2 Manorial Lordship

One of the main ways in which men at this level of society were involved in local government was as manorial lords. Nothing is known of the operation of manorial courts of any of the tenants of the honour of Wallingford in this period. Nevertheless, their lordship over their peasant tenants must be borne in mind when considering the governmental role of knights in this period. There were twenty-seven unfree and five free tenants on the manor of Lillingstone Dayrell in 1279, and ten unfree tenants at Goring in addition to the twenty-three free tenants.²⁰³ Many of these tenancies probably represent a household of two or more individuals. The lords of these manors, especially in relation to their unfree tenants therefore had jurisdiction over sizeable numbers of people. Manorial jurisdiction would have made the knight a judge in matters relating to

²⁰² Thomas, *Heiresses, Crusaders*, pp. 71-2, 85.

²⁰³ *RH*, ii, pp. 340, 777-778.

disputes within the manorial community. This lordship role would have been greatly increased to cover minor breaches of the king's peace if the knight held the franchise of 'view of frankpledge' which gave its holder responsibility for tithing groups otherwise held by the sheriff. In this area, however, being a member of the Wallingford honorial community was significant as it meant that this area of jurisdiction was not in the hands of manorial lords. The view of frankpledge was held by the lord of Wallingford and administered by the steward of the honour. Tenants nevertheless did hold the view in manors they held outside the honour as William (III) fitzEllis did at his manor of Worminghall in 1255.²⁰⁴ Whether they held this franchise or not, however, the position of knights in local government has to be seen in the context of their role as lords of land and men.

5.4.3 Law-worthy knights in the Angevin system

Manorial lordship was central to the economic, social and political position of these families, and though little is known about it directly, it is likely that this situation was established well before the legal reforms of the Angevin period that brought royal justice to an increasingly large number of people, making significant use of local knights in the process. Introduced by King Henry II, the grand assize allowed a defendant to opt to put his case to a jury of twelve law-worthy local knights instead of trial by battle. Four knights were chosen who would then choose a number of knights from whom twelve would be selected as jurors.²⁰⁵ Unsurprisingly, Wallingford knights can be shown to have been very active in the assizes. Fulk (I) of Rycote is known to have acted as an assize

²⁰⁴ *RH*, i, p. 25.

²⁰⁵ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 45–48.

juror in at least five cases, in 1221, 1224, 1223, 1229 and 1231.²⁰⁶ All of these cases except for that of 1221 related to Oxfordshire, while the 1221 case related to Buckinghamshire. Ralph (II) Dayrell was involved in seventeen separate cases in this capacity between 1200 and his death in 1233; in three of these he was one of the four electors and in fourteen he was a juror. The majority of the cases he was involved in related to Middlesex where he held the manor of Hanworth, though a significant minority were related to Buckinghamshire where he held his Lillingstone manor. His contemporary, William (II) fitzEllis also acted as a grand assize juror several times, as well as one of the four knights chosen by the sheriff to elect the jury, as in a case between William de Briwer and Leticia de Salceto in 1224.²⁰⁷ He was also active in petty assizes such as in 1223 when he was a juror in a plea of *mort d'ancestor* in Oxfordshire.²⁰⁸ Any free man could sit as an assize juror whereas the grand assize could only be manned by knights.²⁰⁹ It was only knights who could be chosen to view parties to legal actions who were offering the excuse of bed-sickness, a role which William performed in 1212, and which Ralph (II) Dayrell also performed on two occasions in 1200 and 1212.²¹⁰ These examples come from the early thirteenth century from which period a large number of legal records have been edited and indexed. Yet later in the century too, there is much evidence of Wallingford knights fulfilling these roles. Fulk (II) of Rycote is also known to have acted as a grand assize juror. Indeed, he was a member of both of the only two panels of grand assize knights recorded in the 1261 eyre.²¹¹ One of these involved a

²⁰⁶ CRR, x, p. 16; CRR, xi, p. 292; CPR 1216-1225, p. 395; CPR 1225-1232, p. 349; CRR, xiv, no. 1296.

²⁰⁷ CRR, xi, p. 441.

²⁰⁸ CRR, xi, p. 117.

²⁰⁹ Faulkner, 'Transformation of Knighthood,' p. 2.

²¹⁰ CRR, vi, p. 287; CRR Richard I and John, p. 181; CRR John 11-14, p. 340; Faulkner, 'Transformation of Knighthood,' p. 2; Coss, *Origins*, p. 45.

²¹¹ PRO: JUST 1/701, m. 3, m. 9; Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre of 1261', ii, nos. 40, 194; i, pp. 165-71.

dispute over land at Iffley, near Oxford, while the other involved land at Lyneham in Chadlington hundred in the north-west of the county. He thus continued to take the same public responsibilities Fulk (I) had done forty years earlier. Although these knights were tenants of the honour of Wallingford, and resident within the jurisdiction of its liberty, they were nevertheless active in the administration of Angevin local justice like their peers outside the honour.

5.4.4 The County Court

The shire and hundred courts of Anglo-Saxon England also existed throughout the period under discussion.²¹² All landowners were required to do suit at these public courts, and they appear to have remained central to local government in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries where much local business was carried out. Although details of attendance at meetings of the county court are often unknown, and it is not possible to tell how many of the tenants of the honour were involved in the business of their respective courts, at least one, William (II) fitzEllis, is known to have been active in the Oxfordshire county court throughout his life. He was first recorded in 1203 conveying its record at Westminster, but which he no doubt attended regularly.²¹³ In 1222, along with two other knights, Geoffrey Gibwin and Peter fitzOger, he gave a controversial judgement causing ‘nearly all the knights of the county’ to rise up as they did not wish to be involved.²¹⁴ This incident is discussed below in relation to political activity, but for now William’s presence at meetings of the court shows a further dimension to William’s public role.

²¹² Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 14–18.

²¹³ *CRR*, ii, p. 246.

²¹⁴ *CRR*, x, pp. 267, 344–6; Coss, ‘Knighthood and the Early Thirteenth Century County Court’, pp. 45–57; see below, p.345.

5.4.5 Office-holders of the crown

In addition to fulfilling their role in local procedures of royal justice, knights of the honour also held royal offices in their localities. The most important local office held by knights in this period was that of sheriff. The sheriff was the senior representative of royal government in the county. While sheriffs had tended to be powerful central officials, leading magnates and *curiales*, from the 1230s onwards, Henry III's government began appointing lesser men to the office.²¹⁵ The government's motivation was to increase royal income, but another consequence was to bring the knightly class more firmly into government circles and to create an impression in local society that the sheriff should be a local knight. The reformers of 1258 demanded that sheriffs be vavasours of their counties, rather than, by implication, outsiders.²¹⁶ Peter Coss has argued that men such as these, who were appointed to undertake administrative tasks in the localities were those who were trusted at the centre rather than men who were representatives of their local communities.²¹⁷ It is interesting in this context that there are many examples of tenants of the honour of Wallingford acting as sheriffs. Across the period as a whole, twelve tenants of the honour are known to have been sheriffs and these are set out in the table below.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Carpenter, 'Decline of the Curial Sheriff', pp. 1-32.

²¹⁶ *DBM*, pp. 108-109; Coss, *Origins*, p. 128.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 53-64.

²¹⁸ *List of Sheriffs*, pp. 1, 107-8.

Table 18. Knightly Tenants of the honour of Wallingford serving as sheriffs

Dates	Name	Location of Principal Manor	Number of Manors	Shrievalty
1182	Robert of Wheatfield	Wheatfield, Oxfordshire	1	Oxfordshire
1187	Robert de la Mare	Marsh Baldon, Oxfordshire	3	Oxfordshire
1225	Walter Foliot	Cuxham, Oxfordshire	2	Oxfordshire
1246	Henry Dayrell ²¹⁹	Lillingstone, Buckinghamshire and Hanworth, Middlesex	2	Middlesex
1262-1264	Fulk of Rycote ²²⁰	Rycote, Oxfordshire	1	Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1267-1268	Sampson Foliot	Fritwell, Oxfordshire	3	Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1278-1281	Alan son of Roald	Aston Rowant, Oxfordshire	1	Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1281-1285	John de Thedmers	Tidmarsh, Berkshire		Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1285	Robert Malet	Quainton, Buckinghamshire	1	Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire
1286-1289	Thomas Danvers	Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire	2	Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1307-1308	Thomas Danvers	Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire	2	Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1310-1311	Thomas Danvers	Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire	2	Oxfordshire and Berkshire
1341-1342	Robert fitzEllis	Waterperry, Oxfordshire	3	Oxfordshire and Berkshire

For most of the period 1154-1231, the honour of Wallingford was held by the crown, and Wallingford castle itself was a royal residence, which may have brought tenants of the honour to the attention of the crown more readily. So it is significant that it was not just in the thirteenth century that this was the case with three knights of the

²¹⁹ *CPR 1235-1247*, p. 482.

²²⁰ *CLR 1260-1267*, pp. 123, 133; *CPR 1258-1266*, p. 327; see also *CR 1261-1264*, p. 337; *CR 1264-1268*, p. 162; *CR 1272-1279*, p. 108.

honour, Robert of Wheatfield, Robert de la Mare, and Walter Foliot, holding the office of sheriff before local knights were appointed to the shrievalty as a matter of course. Indeed, connections were probably important in the appointment of many of the Wallingford men in the later thirteenth century, this time their links with the earls of Cornwall. They were, of course, local men as well as people with a connection to the centre, and all of them may well have been the type of sound landholder and vavasour of his county envisaged by the Provisions of Oxford. There is evidence that the shrievalty was part of an administrative career for some knights of the honour.

There were other local royal offices that were filled by tenants of the honour in this period. The coroner, as keeper of the crown pleas in a county, had an important role in the system of royal justice and administration.²²¹ Both of the thirteenth century lords of Rycote served as coroners for Oxfordshire. Fulk (I) was in office when he died in 1233,²²² while Fulk (II) served in the same role in the 1280s.²²³ Coss has argued that the large number of examples of men seeking to relinquish the office suggests that it was an unpopular one due to the fact that it was demanding, financially unrewarding and lacked opportunities for the exercise of power.²²⁴ In the case of the Rycote family it appears that there was a family tradition of holding the office, and Fulk (II), who held it after having held some much more exalted positions, and who was a powerful figure in Oxfordshire society, certainly seems to have found ways to make financial gain out of it. Many complaints were made about Fulk when the general eyre was held at Oxford in 1285,

²²¹ Hunnisett, *The Medieval Coroner*, pp. 1-8.

²²² *CR 1231-1234*, p. 275.

²²³ PRO: JUST 1/705, m. 1; *RH*, ii, p. 33.

²²⁴ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 123-4.

among them involving unjust exactions he made as a coroner.²²⁵ It is interesting that these complaints involved his time as coroner, as sheriff, and as steward of the honour of Wallingford, suggesting that all of them provided Fulk with opportunities for personal gain. Fulk of Rycote, therefore, may have viewed the coronership as an important office and one which was beneficial to his career. It is significant that although he was close to the earl of Cornwall in the 1260s through to the 1290s, his predecessor had been a coroner much earlier in the century. The standing of the Rycote family was based neither entirely on patronage of powerful magnates nor entirely on local standing but rather a combination of contacts and activities.

5.4.6 Commissions

One of the crucial developments in local government identified by Coss as a contributing factor to the creation of the later medieval gentry was the ‘explosion of commissions’ beginning in the reign of Edward I.²²⁶ Indeed, Wallingford knights did receive commissions to carry out certain functions within their localities during this period. William (II) fitzEllis was one of the knights charged with collecting the tax on a fifteenth of moveable goods in Oxfordshire in 1225, which the king allowed his son expenses for in 1228.²²⁷ Later in the reign of Edward I, commissions for specific functions were more frequent. Fulk of Rycote and Sampson Foliot were hundred commissioners for Oxfordshire in 1279.²²⁸ Also in March of that year, the same two knights were commissioned along with Henry de Gildeford to enquire in the counties of Oxfordshire

²²⁵ PRO: JUST 1/705, m. 1d, m. 2; JUST 1/709, m 23.

²²⁶ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 165-187.

²²⁷ *CFR 1227-1228*, 12/149.

²²⁸ *RH*, ii, pp. 688, 822.

and Berkshire as to the sheriff's proceeding with regard to distraint of knighthood ordered by the king the previous Christmas.²²⁹ Fulk of Rycote is especially prominent among commissioners in the later thirteenth century. He is also known to have been commissioned to deliver the Oxford gaol along with other knights on at least two occasions; one in 1279 and one in 1292.²³⁰ At some point, probably in the late 1260s, he had been appointed along with Roger Gernun, Peter Foliot, Richard Foliot and Nicholas de Hanreth the sheriff, to enquire into the state of Oxford castle with its bridge and houses, and found that both had decayed from shrievalty to shrievalty since the time of Godfrey de Crowcombe, to the point that the gaol and brewhouse had fallen down on more than one occasion in recent years!²³¹ It seems therefore, that Fulk was a figure trusted by central government to act on its behalf in Oxfordshire.

The case of Fulk of Rycote demonstrates very well the value of local knights to royal government on the one hand, and the value of office to such men on the other. From the 1260s until the 1290s he was involved in both baronial and royal administration in his home county of Oxfordshire and the surrounding region. His increasing legal and administrative experience no doubt made him valuable both to the crown and to the earl of Cornwall, and was probably an important aspect of his continued activity in this field. But in addition to this, there are other possible factors in his appointment to local office. His high standing in local society as a member of the Oxfordshire local elite, may well have made him a valuable asset for anyone wishing to exert power in the region, whether

²²⁹ *CPR 1272-1281*, p. 342.

²³⁰ *CPR 1279-1272*, p. 338; *CPR 1281-1292*, p. 510.

²³¹ *CIM*, i, no. 336.

royal or baronial. The social and political networks underlying the local government role of such men are considered in the next chapter.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the decline in the number of knights in the thirteenth century and considered aspects of the life style and activities of knightly tenants across the period. The families discussed were part of an elite group in local society. They adopted the trappings of aristocracy and were involved in local government and military service. Cultural developments and changes in methods of royal government are evident in the Wallingford evidence but the overall impression from the limited evidence from this small sample is one of continuity across the period in the areas examined. The question of the emergence of the ‘gentry’ will be returned to at the end of the following chapter, which examines the ways in which tenants interacted with the honour and the wider world.

6 THE COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY OF THE HONOUR, 1154–1300

The period 1154-1300 has been seen as one that witnessed a decline in the political, social and legal importance of honours, as well as an associated growth in the scope of royal government that was bringing ever greater numbers of people into direct contact with the crown.¹ Coss has proposed that one of the effects of the honour's decline was that it forced magnates to develop strategies similar to the 'Bastard Feudal' ones McFarlane and others have observed magnates of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries using to wield power in the localities.² Crouch has countered this argument by proposing that such methods were not new in either the fourteenth or thirteenth centuries and that even in the twelfth century magnates sought to control a geographical area through a variety of means.³ Much recent work, however, has reaffirmed the importance of tenurial ties in thirteenth-century political society. Coss's study of the honour and locality of Coventry showed that such ties were significant in the early part of the century at least.⁴ Carpenter argued in 2000 that the tenurial link remained in many cases a vital aspect of the relationships between magnates and the lesser aristocracy well after 1200.⁵ More recently, studies of Andrew Spencer and Caroline Burt have emphasised the importance of tenure and honorial ties in the exercise of power by magnates in the mid- to late-thirteenth century,⁶ while David Simpkin's analysis of the English aristocracy at war in

¹ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 216-256; Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses*, pp. 44-47.

² McFarlane, 'Bastard Feudalism', pp. 23-44; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 27-64.

³ Carpenter, Crouch, Coss, 'Debate, Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 165-177; Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 133-159.

⁴ Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, esp. ch. 2.

⁵ Carpenter, 'Second Century', pp. 30-71.

⁶ Spencer, 'The Comital retinue in the reign of Edward I', pp. 46-59; Burt, 'A "Bastard Feudal" Affinity in the Making?', pp. 156-180.

Edward I's reign has reaffirmed the importance of feudal obligations in armies.⁷ Detailed work on individual northern honours has recently affirmed the significance such ties could have until the fifteenth century.⁸ Crouch also in recent work stresses the significance of the honour, primarily as a community of tenants, arguing that in identifying the significance of the honour, Stenton recognised that magnate hegemony in England was framed through control of communities, including those of the honour, as well as shires and hundreds.⁹

The honour of Wallingford retained a sense of identity well into the thirteenth century and beyond. It was not just an administrative area or a collection of seigneurial jurisdictions; it was also a community, a focus of local identity, and an important element in the dominance of the earls of Cornwall of local society in the Thames valley. This chapter examines 'horizontal' and 'vertical' associations within the community of the honour and beyond. It will explore the existence of collective identity and the place of the honour in the strategies by which magnates sought to exercise power in the locality in question, as well as those by which tenants sought to secure their own interests.

On Friday 24 June, the feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, 1278, Edmund, earl of Cornwall, issued a charter founding a college of secular canons at the chapel of St Nicholas in Wallingford Castle. The text of the charter as it appears in the *inspeximus* and confirmation of King Edward I is set out below:

Inspeximus and confirmation of a charter, whereby Edmund, earl of Cornwall, for the souls of Richard, king of Almain, his father, and Sanchia his mother, Henry king of England his uncle, and

⁷ Simpkin, *English Aristocracy at War*, pp. 151–185.

⁸ Devine, 'The Lordship of Richmond in the Later Middle Ages', pp. 98–110; Rose, 'Landed Society and the Honour of Pontefract'.

⁹ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 158–159.

THE COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY OF THE HONOUR, 1154–1300

the present king gave to St Mary and the chapel of St Nicholas in the castle of Wallingford and to the master of the said chapel, for the support of the said master and five chaplains, six clerks and four acolytes (*ceroferorum*) there 40*l.* of rent in Warborough and Shillingford receivable from the tenants of those towns, to be held in frank almoin; witnesses, Sir Sampson Foliot, Sir Alan son of Roald, Sir Robert Malet and Sir Peter de la Mare, Sir John Neirnut, Sir John Carbonel, Sir Fulk of Rycote, Sir Hugh Druval, Sir Ralph Dayrel, knights; dated at Wallingford, Friday the feast of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, 6 Edward I.¹⁰

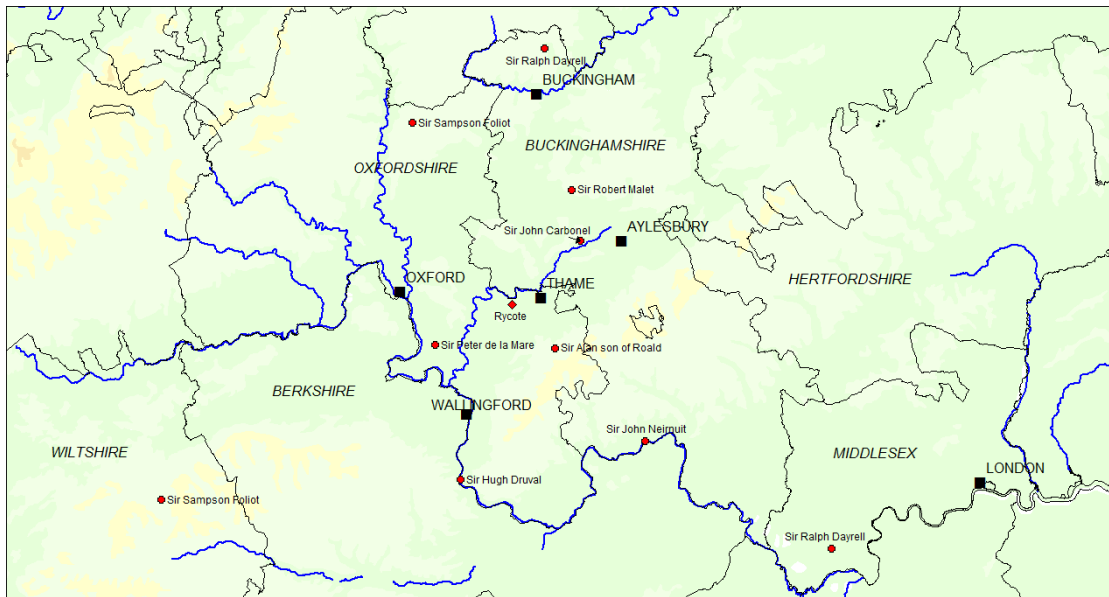
This charter, the original of which is not extant, is striking evidence of the relationship between the earl of Cornwall and his honour of Wallingford, of the nature of honorial ties in this period, and of the continued importance of the institution two centuries after the Norman Conquest.

The witness list is of prime significance as unlike many other charter witness lists, it consists entirely of tenants of the honour. Sampson Foliot held two fees of the honour at Chilton Foliot, Manton and Ogbourne in Wiltshire as his family had done for over 150 years. Alan son of Roald held half a knights' fee at Aston Rowant in Oxfordshire. Robert Malet's family had held one-and-a-half fees of the honour at Quainton Malet in Buckinghamshire for at least a century. Peter de la Mare held three fees of the honour in Marsh Baldon and Heyford in Oxfordshire, and Botolph Claydon in Buckinghamshire and Cherrington in Gloucestershire, and again he was the representative of a family of tenants that had held of the honour since at least the early twelfth century. John Neirnut held two fees of the honour at Fleet Marston in Buckinghamshire, at Linley and Kingston in Oxfordshire, and at Tideour in Wiltshire of the honour. John Carbonel held one fee at Beachendon in Buckinghamshire. Fulk of Rycote held the manor of Rycote in Oxfordshire for one knight's fee. Hugh de Druval held the manor of Goring in Oxfordshire for two knights' fees and was another representative of an old honorial

¹⁰ *CChR 1257-1300*, p. 209.

family, with connections with the Crispin family in Normandy dating back before the Conquest. Finally Ralph Dayrell held the Middlesex manor of Hanworth for half a knight's fee.

Figure 9. Map showing principal lands of witnesses to charter of Edmund of Cornwall founding college at St Nicholas's Chapel in 1278



The list of witnesses to this charter represents the full geographical area of the honour of Wallingford, with representatives of all of the counties which had major Wallingford holdings. Many were also from families that had been in possession of the same estates for over a century, and all of the nine families held their estates in the first decade of the thirteenth century. This then, was a self-consciously honorial document. We cannot be certain that all those witnessing were present but it is highly likely that they were. The Nativity of St John the Baptist was one of the major feast days of the year, held at midsummer and an ideal occasion for a large gathering. The charter appears to be evidence of a great meeting of tenants of the honour of Wallingford at the castle,

attending on the lord of their fee, who for the souls of his father and mother, made a substantial endowment to the chapel founded by the honour's first Norman lord, Miles Crispin. Though we have no evidence of it, this great honorial occasion may well have been accompanied by liturgical celebrations for the feast in the chapel, and then by feasting in Earl Edmund's hall in the castle in their lord's presence.

Edmund's foundation bears significant comparison with the foundation of family religious houses after the Norman Conquest, where a community of tenants would gather on some significant feast day to witness the foundation of a family monastery, and often make contributions to the lord's endowment themselves. Such honorial foundations provide evidence of the importance of honorial communities in late eleventh and early twelfth century society.¹¹ Together with attendance at the lord's court, an honorial church could provide a focal point for the honorial community that could give expression to, and strengthen, the common bond between tenants of the same lord, and between them and their lord. The changing habits of religious endowment and the breakdown of ties of lordship have been seen as related phenomena. Indeed, Richard Mortimer has suggested that an element in the motivation of the lords of Clare in founding Stoke-by-Clare Priory and encouraging donations from their tenants was precisely to emphasise their tenants' links to the Clare honour in the context of multiple tenurial ties.¹² The foundation of a chapel at the centre of the honour of Wallingford in the presence of nine of the honour's tenants looks very similar therefore to the kinds of foundations that historians have seen as central to early twelfth century structures of lordship.

¹¹ Cowrie, *Religious Patronage*, p. 169; pp. 172-5; Mortimer, 'Land and Service', pp. 177-97, p. 195.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 195.

It is possible that this charter was of limited significance either to the earl or his tenants. The presence of the tenants at this occasion may have been little more than formality. Yet in the context of the other evidence we have for the continued significance of the honour, it seems to be important evidence of the honour's identity. It had on the one hand a vertical, lordship dimension, and on the other a horizontal, community one. Edmund's foundation could be seen as an attempt to promote the honour of Wallingford and its history to some of its influential tenants. In this sense it could be seen as accompanying the earls' assertion of franchisal jurisdictions that was discussed in chapter 4. The honour of Wallingford had not enjoyed the continuous lordship of one dynasty since the Conquest like the Ferrers or Clare honours, and Edmund may have been seeking to develop such an identity. On the other hand, this could represent an attempt by Edmund to position himself and his family within an existing tradition of community within the honour. The feast of St John the Baptist may even have been a day when the Wallingford honour court met on a regular basis; an example of a once or twice a year 'great court' of the kind known to have existed in other honours, but for which we have no evidence for Wallingford. The foundation of the prebends of the chapel and the attempted foundation by Brian fitzCount and then Duke Henry of Normandy of a house of canons regular at the chapel is discussed above.¹³ This could suggest that the chapel in the castle at Wallingford had been the spiritual centre of a community since the eleventh century. If so, the earl's significant patronage of it in 1278, a recognition and promotion of the honorial community.

In each case, the vertical and the horizontal, tenure was clearly considered significant in the reign of Edward I. Either Edmund thought it should be important or he

¹³ *RRAN*, iii, no. 88.

thought that his knights would believe it so. It also highlights the way in which lordship, community, and awareness of shared family history were all part of honorial identity even in the late thirteenth century. These elements operated together in Edmund's foundation at the chapel of St Nicholas, and represent a dimension to tenurial identity that did not involve legal coercion and exploitation of feudal rights, but appealed to community sentiment. To understand the nature of the Wallingford honorial community, the other evidence for the vertical and horizontal aspects of the lordship must be examined.

6.1 THE LORDS OF WALLINGFORD AND THEIR TENANTS

How important was the honour of Wallingford to its lords as a method of attracting service and exerting power across the period? Related to this is the question of the significance of the power of the lord of Wallingford in the lives of his tenants. The investigation in chapter 4 into the jurisdiction and internal administration of the honour argues that the lord had considerable influence over both his tenants and all free men living within the manors of the honour. Attention will now be turned to the tenants themselves and their relationship with the lords of Wallingford across the period.

6.1.1 Geography and display

Wallingford castle must have been integral to the lord's power in the honour and beyond. This is perhaps the least tangible and most difficult to demonstrate in the evidence, but

must be considered as the essential background to the lordship of the honour. The castle had been of great strategic significance in the civil war of Stephen's reign and became one of Henry of Anjou's principal military and political centres. It was at Wallingford, at Easter after his accession, that the newly crowned Henry II held a great council to agree the succession of his son.¹⁴ Thereafter it remained an important royal castle and later, Henry's son John is known to have made frequent visits to the castle both as count of Poitou and as king.¹⁵ It was then used by John's son, Richard, earl of Cornwall, as his administrative centre and main residence between 1230 and 1272, when he died at the castle.

In any consideration of Wallingford in the thirteenth century, attention must be paid to the context of its owner, Richard, earl of Cornwall. Richard is known to have taken his German role seriously, and was styled *semper Augustus* and referred to as 'king of Germany' or 'king of the Romans'.¹⁶ Wallingford castle was the *caput* not just of the honour of Wallingford but of the entire earldom of Cornwall across England, and the centre of the pan-European operations of a famous crusader and royal potentate. As a man who was imminently to become the lay head of Christendom, the status of Richard and his castle should not therefore be forgotten in any assessment of thirteenth century Wallingford. As the headquarters of the aspirant Holy Roman Emperor and the wealthiest magnate in England, the castle is likely to have been an imposing presence, visible across the relatively low lying Oxfordshire plain from many miles away. Richard's tastes were grand and the little that is known of the earl's use of Wallingford

¹⁴ *Gervase of Canterbury*, i, p. 162; Cerda, 'The Councils of Henry II', pp. 28, 215, 218-35.

¹⁵ He made ten separate visits as king staying total of eighteen days. Julie Kanter, personal communication. See Kanter, 'Peripatetic and sedantry kingship'.

¹⁶ Weiler, 'Image and Reality in Richard of Cornwall's German Career', pp. 1111-1142.

suggests great opulence. In 1248, Paris described how he entertained a great number of magnates at Wallingford to celebrate Christmas Day.¹⁷ A few years later in 1251, Earl Richard implied to Paris at the dedication of the abbey of Hailes that he had spent large sums of money on Wallingford, remarking to the chronicler, *Utinam Deo complaceret ut omnia quae in castro de Walingeford expendi tam sapienter et tam salubriter expendissem*.¹⁸

The status and opulence of the castle itself, together with the power and influence of its often-resident lord, must have been an important factor in ensuring the continued vitality of the honour of Wallingford in the thirteenth century. Historians have shown that part of the cause of the decline of tenurial structures was the way in which tenants looked beyond their landlords for ‘good lordship’.¹⁹ If a lord was frequently absent or ineffective, there would have been powerful reasons for tenants to look elsewhere for lordship. In the case of the tenants of the honour of Wallingford, however, Earl Richard’s wealth, power, and his closeness to the king of England, as well as his large number of estates in the region meant that his influence in the upper Thames valley would have been unmatched by any other magnate.

6.1.2 Tenants in the service of the earls of cornwall

How common was it for tenants to serve the lords of Wallingford in this period? For present purposes, attention will be focussed on the earls of Cornwall in the thirteenth century, as the crown’s period of holding the honour complicates matters. No full-scale

¹⁷ Paris, *Chronica Majora*, v, p. 47: *...comes Ricardus... fuit apud Walingeford cum copiosa magnatum multitudine convivantium, dies Natalicios celebrando*.

¹⁸ Ibid., v, p. 262.

¹⁹ Carpenter, ‘Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised’, pp. 188-189.

analysis of the retinues of either Earl Richard or Earl Edmund has yet been undertaken, and is beyond the scope of the present study. A relatively large number of charters of the earls of Cornwall exist but in the absence of any collection, for present purposes, analysis will be restricted to *inspeximus* copies of the earls' charters enrolled on the royal charter rolls together with a further seven witness lists of acts of the earls of Cornwall preserved in Edmund of Cornwall's cartulary. These surviving charters provide evidence of the earls' followings in their witness lists. Administrative accounts of the earldom of Cornwall dating from the 1290s also survive and contain the names of administrative personnel. Finally, the identities of some individuals in the earls' service are revealed in the royal administrative records.

As is to be expected, the majority of the men in the retinues of Richard and Edmund of Cornwall were not tenants of the honour of Wallingford. What is interesting, however, is that the earls were served by tenants of the honour. A list of royal protections granted to those travelling to Germany with Earl Richard for his coronation as King of the Romans was recorded in the patent rolls in 1257.²⁰ The list includes a sizeable number of knightly tenants of the earl. Of these, Stephen de Chenduit and Hugh le Despenser were tenants of the honour.

The evidence of the charter witness lists we have is difficult to use to determine who was regularly in attendance on the earl. The bulk of witnesses for any one charter generally appear to represent the locality the charter is dealing with. Nevertheless, for individuals to witness a charter of the earl of Cornwall must represent some kind of

²⁰ *CPR 1247-1258*, pp. 589-90; Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall*, pp. 90-91; Jobson, 'Richard of Cornwall and the Baronial Opposition', pp. 61-74.

connection with the earls; and those who witnessed charters on more than one occasion can probably be considered to have had a greater connection with the earls.

The royal charter rolls and Edmund's cartulary provide us with a sample of seventeen charters, which shall be used to test how far the honour's tenants were present in the earls' followings.²¹ The seventeen charters, six of Earl Richard and eleven of Earl Edmund, that have been selected are those which have independent lists of witnesses; so charters issued on the same day with the same witnesses have not been included. Although not systematic, these charters range in date from 1236 to 1299 and feature 143 witnesses in total. Of the seven witness lists in the cartulary (E 36/57), six are those of Edmund, and one is of Earl Richard. From these witness lists, a relatively clear, though certainly incomplete, picture of the principal personnel that made up the earls' followings develops. Ninety-seven of the 143 witnesses attested only once, twenty-seven attested twice, eight attested three times, four five times, two six times, and one eight and one nine times. The clerk, Michael of Northampton attested seven times between the years 1259 and 1294, while Sir Geoffrey Russel, styled Earl Edmund's steward on one occasion, attested six of the same charters, excluding the earliest.²² Both these men therefore appear to have been central figures in the earldom's administration, and have been found to have attested the largest number of charters.

Though by no means dominant, tenants of the honour of Wallingford feature prominently among the sample. Twelve of the 143 witnesses were tenants of the honour, and others have toponyms such as 'Wedon and (the very common) 'de la Mare', that

²¹ The sample includes charters of Earl Richard at: *CChR 1226-1257*, p. 223; *CChR 1257-1300*, pp. 24-5, 99, 240, 323, 378. Earl Edmund: *CChR 1257-1300*, pp. 208, 209, 240, 324, 330, 339, 349, 383-6, 443; PRO: E 36/57, f. 14v., f. 25v, f. 31v., f. 43v, f. 45v., f. 63v., f. 66v.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 24-5, 208, 240, 349, 443.

suggest they could be connected with tenant families. Five tenants of the honour witnessed more than one of the sample charters: Sir Robert Malet, lord of the Wallingford manor of Quainton Malet in Buckinghamshire; Sir John Neirnut, who held of the honour at Fleet Marston in Buckinghamshire, and Linley in Stokenchurch, Oxfordshire; Sir Hugh de Druval, lord of Goring in Oxfordshire; Sir Fulk of Rycote, lord of Rycote in Oxfordshire, and Henry le Tyes who held the estates that had belonged to the Foliot family in Chilton Foliot, Ogbourne and Mannington in Wiltshire.²³ Robert Malet attested six charters, mainly those of Edmund of Cornwall in the 1270s, while John Neirnut attested three charters, one in 1278, one in 1285 and one 1291. Hugh de Druval and Henry le Tyes each also witnessed three times, while Fulk of Rycote attested twice. Other tenants in of the honour, Sir Sampson Foliot, Sir Alan son of Roald, Sir Peter de la Mare, Sir John Carbonel, Sir Ralph Dayrell, witnessed only the 1278 charter in the sample, while Sir Ralph Pippard witnessed one. To have such a large representation of tenants of the honour in such a small sample of charters, suggests that there was a link in the late thirteenth century between the lords of Wallingford and the men who also held of them by knight service; their association was more than purely tenurial.

How should these relationships be understood? How significant was the tenurial connection in bringing these men into the circle of the earls? Most of those Wallingford tenants who witnessed charters of the earl were relatively small landholders with between one and five manors. On the other hand, they were all knights, which by Edward I's reign implied considerable local status. Only Ralph Pippard was of baronial standing. Although he held Great Haseley in Oxfordshire and a number of other manors of the honour of Wallingford, as his family had done since the time of Miles Crispin, whose

²³ See earlier chapters and Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 295-327.

steward was one Gilbert Pippard, by the start of the thirteenth century the Pippards had become minor barons in their own right and were Irish magnates. The other Wallingford tenants were members of the local elite. Some of them held office in the earl's formal administration. Robert Malet, the most frequent attester in the sample, and witness to six charters, served Earl Edmund as steward of the honour of Wallingford, as he is styled in one of the witness lists.²⁴ Fulk of Rycote is also known to have acted as steward of the honour, but he also held office in local royal administration as a coroner and as sheriff, following in the footsteps of his family, who had earlier in the thirteenth century provided an Oxfordshire coroner.²⁵ In bringing members of local society to witness their charters, the earls were maintaining contact with important local figures. Men such as Geoffrey Russel (who witnessed six times), Roger de Draiton (who witnessed eight times) and the clerk Michael of Northampton (who witnessed nine times) seem to have been members of the earls' household, whereas the Wallingford tenants, with the exception of Robert Malet who may also have been a member of Edmund of Cornwall's affinity, appear as members of local society and witness in instances where their locality was involved. This dual relationship between them and the local area on the one hand and between them and the earl on the other may well have been part of the value of the relationship for the earls. Among tenants who witnessed the earls' charters there would have been those like Robert Malet and Stephen Chenduit who were connected to the earl's household and might travel with him, as well as those who were in the earls' service locally, as Fulk of Rycote was. Thirdly there were tenants who came into contact with the earl but on a less regular basis.

²⁴ PRO: E 36/57, f. 31v.

²⁵ See above, p. 272.

It is worth considering some individual relationships in more detail. Hugh (III) de Druval witnessed at least three charters of his feudal lords; one of Richard, earl of Cornwall and one of his son Edmund's. The first of these was a charter of Earl Richard dated 18 April 1266 at Burnham, granting to the monastery the chapel of Chippenham, along with a water mill at Aymale with accompanying fish pond, mill dam, water course and pasture.²⁶ It was witnessed by Earl Richard's sons, Henry of Almain, and Edmund, as well as Roger of Aymale who must have been a local person, an unidentified Hoyvile, Hugh de Druval, Henry le Tyes, Gilbert de Wesewykes and William Pasket identified as the bailiff of Earl Richard. This witness list is significant as it seems to indicate a relatively domestic arena for the grant, implying that the earl had gathered members of his household to witness the charter. Richard's two sons were clearly close to him, while Henry le Tyes is known to have been a prominent follower, and William Pasket is named as his bailiff. Hugh de Druval's presence among this group of attestors would seem to suggest that Hugh, relatively far from home, was a member of Earl Richard's affinity. Hugh was also a witness of Edmund's 1278 charter founding the chapel of St Nicholas. The differing circumstances of each of the charters suggest a relationship that was more than purely formal, and point to an important connection between Hugh de Druval and the most powerful family in England after the king.

Close links between knights who held of the honour and the earls of Cornwall were not necessarily 'feudal', however; that is, tenure may not have been the central factor in the creation or cementing of the relationship even if it had been a factor at all. Fulk (II) of Rycote is a case in point. The earls of Cornwall were the only magnates to whom the Rycotes had a tenurial connection. And this connection seems to have been an

²⁶ *CChR 1257-1300*, p. 99.

important one for Fulk (II) of Rycote, who served as steward of the honour of Wallingford, and who is known to have witnessed Earl Edmund's charters. The precise dates of his service to the earls of Cornwall are difficult to determine. As we have seen, Fulk (II) of Rycote was an official of Richard, earl of Cornwall towards the end of the latter's life. That he may have been in Earl Richard's service before that is suggested by a charter of 18 March 1257 in which Roger Damory quitclaims land at Weston-on-the-Green to Thame Abbey.²⁷ Firstly, Roger Damory is known to have been a member of the earl's retinue, having accompanied him on his first trip to Germany in 1257.²⁸ Also, Richard of Cornwall settled a dispute between Roger Damory and the abbot of Oseney over this manor at the earl's manor at Beckley in 1260.²⁹ The charter was witnessed by, among others, Ralph of Chesterton, a tenant of the honour of Wallingford, John de la Penne, described as the steward of the king of the Romans, Gilbert de Bracy, William Quatremains and Fulk of Rycote. Despite being witnessed by a number of Oxfordshire knights, the charter was dated at Westminster rather than nearer Thame. That the charter was issued by a member of Earl Richard's household and was witnessed by at least two of his tenants (one, Fulk, a future steward), and his steward, all point to the possibility that Fulk was part of Richard of Cornwall's retinue at this time.

There is also the possibility that he was still the steward several years after this, around 1277. Matilda of Gloucester, prioress of Littlemore, issued a charter confirming a grant by her predecessor, Amabilia of Sandford, which is preserved in the Sandford Cartulary.³⁰ The charter which it confirms, issued by Amabilia, who was prioress from

²⁷ *Thame*, no. 33.

²⁸ *CChR 1247-1258*, p. 589.

²⁹ *Oseney*, vi, p. 3; *VCH Oxford*, vi, p. 346-52;.

³⁰ *Sandford*, no. 26.

1266 until 1274,³¹ was witnessed by Geoffrey of Lewknor, then steward of Wallingford.³² The confirmation charter of Matilda of Gloucester, who was elected prioress in 1277,³³ was witnessed solely by Fulk of Rycote, which could indicate he was once more the steward.

While no evidence of Fulk holding administrative positions under Edmund of Cornwall is extant, he witnessed at least two of Edmund of Cornwall's charters which have been preserved as *inspeximus* copies enrolled on the charter rolls.³⁴ The first of these is the 1278 chapel charter. The other does perhaps point to a closer relationship between Fulk and the earl.³⁵ This was issued by the earl at Oxford on the feast of St Nicholas in 1287 inspecting and confirming the grant by the abbey of Rewley of a rent of 30s which had been Edmund's gift, to the abbey of Thame. Fulk is the first of nine named witnesses to this charter, three of whom are described as knights, and one as a clerk. The two other knights named, Sir Elias of Wheatfield and Sir William of Saunderton were tenants of the honour of Wallingford as well as Fulk. While the selection of witnesses to Earl Edmund's 1278 Wallingford charter appears to have been influenced by honorial ties, this charter seems to be influenced by ties of neighbourhood. The charter relates to two Oxfordshire houses, and was issued at Oxford. Fulk was a neighbour and benefactor of Thame Abbey, as were Elias of Wheatfield and William of Saunderton; also among the witnesses was Nicholas the goldsmith of Oxford. Thus again, our evidence for Fulk's relationship with the earl of Cornwall is in the context of a specific circumstance; this time, a local issue. Both of these charters reveal that Fulk was

³¹ *VCH Oxford*, ii, pp. 75-77.

³² *Sandford*, no. 25.

³³ *VCH Oxford*, ii, pp. 75-77.

³⁴ *CChR 1257-1300*, pp. 209, 539.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 539.

involved in the actions of the earl in two sets of circumstances. In 1278 he witnessed the earl's charter as a leading tenant of the honour of Wallingford, while in 1287 he witnessed the charter as not just a man of the earl, but no doubt also as an important local knight and benefactor of Thame. Fulk therefore maintained his connection to the new earl of Cornwall after the death of Earl Richard, whom he had served as steward.

We should be cautious in labelling the relationship between Fulk of Rycote and the earls of Cornwall entirely 'feudal'. Ties of tenure were no doubt highly significant contributing factors. The 1278 St Nicholas's Chapel charter is significant evidence of a strong sense of Wallingford honorial identity, and it is quite possible that an active honour court would have expected one of their number to be appointed steward as frequently happened during the twelfth and early thirteenth century when the honour had been in royal hands. On the other hand, Fulk's relationship with the earls may have owed more to his administrative career described above, and to his position in local society. It is probable that his appointment to the shrievalty of Oxfordshire and Berkshire from 1262 to 1264 owed much to the influence of Richard, earl of Cornwall, who was pre-eminently powerful in the region. While the earl's formal jurisdiction did not include any rights over the shrievalty as it did in Cornwall,³⁶ for instance, informal influence cannot be ruled out. Yet there may well have been other factors contributing to the appointment. The Rycote family had a tradition of local administrative service dating from before the overlordship of the earls of Cornwall came about. It is possible that it was the Rycote family's social standing and local influence that contributed to Fulk's appointment to the shrievalty, and which also made him valuable to the earls of Cornwall. It is unlikely that the relationship between Fulk of Rycote and the earls was entirely the result of feudal

³⁶ Page, 'Cornwall, Earl Richard and the Barons' War', p. 28.

tenure. Earl Richard seems to have shown little interest in Fulk when he was a minor, granting custody of his lands to Roger de Quincy, earl of Winchester who sold it on to Geoffrey de Stocwell.³⁷ It is quite likely that it was Fulk's administrative experience as a coroner and sheriff and his family's standing in Oxfordshire society that attracted the earls of Cornwall to him.

The relationship between Ralph (III) Chenduit and Richard of Cornwall illustrates how tenure could be important in forming relationships with lords, but how other factors could be vital as well. In the spring of 1230, Ralph was to be found in the service of William Marshal II, earl of Pembroke, travelling with him on the king's expedition to France.³⁸ He had inherited his estates in 1229 at a time when Earl Richard's hold on his estates was insecure due to his age. The young Richard was close to William Marshal II in the factional politics of the period, and Ralph must have faced a dilemma. In order to enter into his inheritance, he needed to do homage to the king, who was his lord, but his long term interests lay with Richard of Cornwall, who he could expect to be his lord eventually. By entering into the service of the Marshal, he was positioning himself with a circle of magnates with which his new young lord was becoming increasingly involved. Ralph Chenduit can therefore be seen to have been acting very independently but with feudal relationships in mind. Ralph's valuable marriage to the heiress of the Wallingford tenant, Walter Foliot of Cuxham in Oxfordshire, which took place in this period, may have been purchased from Richard. It is also possible that it was a gift.³⁹ If this were so, then it was an act of feudal patronage, but one that came after Ralph Chenduit secured his relationship politically. Ralph's ties with the Marshal family continued; in 1242 he acted

³⁷ *VCH Buckinghamshire*, iv, pp. 323-27.

³⁸ *CPR 1225-1232*, p. 357.

³⁹ Harvey, *Medieval Oxfordshire Village*, p. 4.

as surety for the £100 relief John Marshal and his wife Margaret gave the king for the inheritance of the estate of Margaret's brother Thomas, earl of Warwick.⁴⁰ As with Fulk of Rycote, tenure does seem to have been important in the relationship between Earl Richard and his tenant, but this was not a purely one-way link; the benefits were in some respects mutual, and the association was created by both parties.

Earl Edmund's foundation charter for the chapel of St Nicholas in 1278, included in the sample of charter witness lists analysed, appears to have been a specifically honorial document and the testing clause therefore does not reflect the earl's regular household. This fuller analysis of a sample of Richard and Edmund's charters shows that tenants of the honour did nevertheless serve their lords. Ties of lordship were not, however, restricted to the lord of Wallingford.

6.2 TIES OF LORDSHIP BEYOND THE HONOUR

One of the main themes in twentieth century historiography has been the decline in the significance of the honour as a focus of social and political organisation. This has been attributed partly to the growing independence of knightly tenants from their feudal lords, brought about by the increasing scope of royal justice and the involvement of knights in royal government, and partly to the demand on the part of lords for good service and their willingness to look beyond their tenants for retainers.⁴¹ Associated with this decline of the honour was on the one hand the rise of the independent political voice of the minor landowners and the strengthening of a sense of county community, and on the other hand, a shift in power structures that meant that magnates exerted their influence in the

⁴⁰ *CFR* 1242, 26/485.

⁴¹ Most recently, Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 117-159.

localities through influencing the holders of royal offices in the localities, the so-called shift ‘from feudalism to bastard feudalism’.⁴²

The knightly families of the honour of Wallingford provide us with a valuable insight into this process. The honour of Wallingford appears not to have declined in importance during this period, but rather in some ways to have increased in importance as it became part of the central element in the administration of the earls of Cornwall and accrued jurisdictional immunities. Yet, though a community, it was not an entirely self-contained entity; multiple tenure was common, as were connections between tenants of the honour and magnates with whom there was little or no tenorial connection. There is much evidence of independent action among the knightly tenants of the honour, and it is clear that individuals pursued their own interests in their own particular circumstances. In many instances this led them to a connection with the honour of Wallingford and its lords, but for a variety of reasons, it also led elsewhere.

Ties of tenure were important to the families who held of the honour. Just as multiple lordship was common in the early twelfth century, it remained so in the later twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The fitzEllis family had as many as six feudal lords. Throughout the thirteenth century, each of these lords, who included the earls of Gloucester, Cornwall, Warwick, and for some of the time the king himself, could conceivably lay claim the loyalty of their fitzEllis tenants. They probably owed liege homage to the d’Oilly family for Waterperry.

The d’Oillys were a family of middle ranking Oxfordshire barons, who had been lords of Waterperry since Domesday.⁴³ There is evidence to suggest that there was an

⁴² Ibid.; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 27-64; Crouch, Carpenter, Coss, 'Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 165-189.

active lordship connection between the fitzEllises and their d'Oilly lords, though in this case as in others, the boundaries between what constitutes lordly influence and what was the result of local connections are blurred. The d'Oillys appear to have offered leadership in religious patronage. They had close links to Oseney Abbey in Oxford in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as indeed did the fitzEllises.⁴⁴ Henry d'Oilly, William (II) fitzEllis and his brother Ellis fitzEllis together witnessed the sale of land by Oseney to Newburgh Priory in the late 1180s.⁴⁵ In the 1180s, Henry d'Oilly as the fitzEllises' lord confirmed the grant William (I) and Emma fitzEllis had made to Oseney of the church at Waterperry.⁴⁶ Furthermore, in 1189, d'Oilly was witness to a charter of Emma fitzEllis concerning the same church.⁴⁷ And when Henry d'Oilly granted his manor of Weston to the abbey in 1226, William fitzEllis was listed second among the witnesses, after the sheriff of Oxfordshire.⁴⁸ All of this shows some level of contact between lord and knightly tenant as well as similar religious interests. On the other hand, these dealings with Oseney demonstrate the neighbourly ties as much as those of lordship. Henry d'Oilly's charter of 1226 was witnessed by the sheriff of Oxford, and most of the d'Oilly honour was in a relatively compact area of Oxfordshire, blurring somewhat the boundaries between local ties based on geographical proximity and feudal ties based on links to the same lord. Oseney Abbey was after all, one of the foremost religious houses of the county and less than ten miles from Waterperry.

⁴³ GDB, f 158v.

⁴⁴ *Oseney*, iv pp. 19-20, 44, 258; *CChR 1226-1257*, p. 48.

⁴⁵ *Oseney*, vi, p. 180.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, iv, p. 258.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, iv, pp. 374-5.

⁴⁸ *CChR 1226-1257*, p. 49.

The second arena in which we see active d'Oilly lordship is when in 1208, Henry d'Oilly successfully claimed the right to hear a case between William fitzEllis and Ralph de Bray, another d'Oilly tenant, in his own court.⁴⁹ The dispute was over two hides in Tiddington, which the king had taken into his own hands according to usual custom in these matters. It is unclear as to the outcome of this case, though Ralph seems to have brought another complaint against William in the royal courts the following year,⁵⁰ and the two were still in dispute in 1223.⁵¹ On the one hand, this shows that the honorial court was certainly working and that Henry d'Oilly made an effort to deal with a dispute between two of his tenants himself. On the other hand, while he may have profited financially from this, he does not appear to have been able to solve the dispute.

The link between the fitzEllises and their d'Oilly lords may have been weakened by the presence of a mesne lord holding between them. As a result of a lawsuit in the 1180s, an agreement was made with Richard de Beaufeu that gave him a third of the fitzEllis fee in Waterperry and made him lord over the remaining two-thirds still in fitzEllis hands.⁵² By the 1240s it seems there was another lord between the Beaufeus and d'Oillys' successors, one Reginald fitzHerbert,⁵³ who may have been a relation of Peter fitzHerbert, the marcher lord of Blaenllyfni who had no clear connections in the locality.⁵⁴ The presence of these two lords holding between the fitzEllises and the lords of the d'Oilly honour can only have served to weaken further the bond between them.⁵⁵ It may be concluded therefore that while the connections between William fitzEllis and

⁴⁹ *CRR*, v, pp. 210, 214

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 326.

⁵¹ *CRR*, xi, p. 26.

⁵² *CIPM*, i, p. 17; *VCH Oxfordshire*, v, p. 297.

⁵³ *Book of Fees*, pp. 826, 837.

⁵⁴ *VCH Oxfordshire*, v, p. 297.

⁵⁵ Carpenter, *Struggle for Mastery*, p. 396.

his feudal landlord in this period had substance and were more than purely legalistic, they were significantly less influential than they could have been. After Henry d'Oilly's death in 1232, the honour passed to his nephew, Thomas de Newburgh, earl of Warwick, and was held of the earls from then on. From 1240 until 1263, John de Plessy held the earldom of Warwick and was therefore the family's feudal lord, though there is no evidence of any connection here.

The same is true in the case of the Gloucester fees. The fitzEllis family properties of Worminghall in Buckinghamshire and Corton in Wiltshire were held of the earldom of Gloucester.⁵⁶ Corton, as has been shown, was granted to Roger, a younger son of William (III) fitzEllis at some point in the mid thirteenth century, while Worminghall continued to be held along with Waterperry and Oakley.⁵⁷ There is, however, very little direct evidence linking the fitzEllis family to the Clares. As with the d'Oillies in Waterperry, the fitzEllises had mesne lords between them and the earls of Gloucester. In Worminghall, the holding was direct from the earl, though only half a fee. The fee in Corton was held of the Waspail family who in turn held of the honor of Gloucester.⁵⁸ Again this would have weakened the feudal link. Membership of the honour of Gloucester therefore had only minimal impact on the fitzEllis family.

The other main tenurial link for the fitzEllis family was of course the honour of Wallingford, of which their manor of Oakley in Buckinghamshire formed a part. As we shall see, the family gained this manor against the will of King John, lord of the honour at the time, who repeatedly confirmed the Basset descendants of Osmund Basset in the tenure of the manor, and who was apparently forced to accept William fitzEllis's

⁵⁶ *Book of Fees*, pp. 723, 874; *Feudal Aids*, p. 94.

⁵⁷ *CChR 1327-1341*, p. 486; Macnamara, *Memorials of the Danvers Family*, p. 207.

⁵⁸ *CRR*, i, p.124; *Book of Fees*, p. 723.

hereditary claim in the circumstances of the great rebellion of 1215. Thereafter, despite the apparent vitality of the Wallingford honorial community, there is little evidence of a lordship connection between the fitzEllis family and the lords of Wallingford.

What evidence is there for the existence of lordship connections that did not have a tenurial basis? The independence of action displayed by Ralph Chenduit in serving William Marshal shows the possibility of such lordship arrangements. Ties with magnates other than a feudal lord can be traced in other cases. Despite his association with the earls of Cornwall, there is evidence to suggest that Hugh (III) de Druval had connections with another magnate, Thomas Grelley, lord of Manchester in Lancashire. On 13 July 1260, Hugh de Druval acted as a surety for bail for Thomas de Pierrepont, William son of Ranulph of Heton and Thomas's servant (*garcione*), Elias who had been imprisoned at St Alban's.⁵⁹ Alongside Hugh were Sir Thomas Grelley, Sir William de Huntercombe, Sir Geoffrey de Chetham, Sir Henry de Longo Campo, Sir Robert de Neuton, Sir William de Kirketon, Adam son of Warin de Waleton, Adam de Holand, Nicholas Lee, Richard le Bret and Robert de Stutson.

While a number of these men were linked by an association with the reform programme, the primary link between all these men was almost certainly Sir Thomas Grelley. Grelley was lord of the barony of Manchester and son and heir of Robert Grelley, one of the northern barons who were prominent in the rebellion of 1215.⁶⁰ Robert was among those present at Runnymede in June and had his lands confiscated by King John and then returned to him in 1217 by Henry III.⁶¹ Thomas succeeded Robert on

⁵⁹ *CR 1259-1261*, pp. 73-4.

⁶⁰ Farrer, *Honours*, ii, pp. 194, 251; *VCH Lancashire*, i, pp. 326-32.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

his death in 1231 and took part in the Marshal rebellion of 1233.⁶² He was clearly a man of ‘national’ significance demonstrated by his position as one of the twenty-four electors chosen in 1258 and by his important role as keeper of the royal forest.

The men who were released on bail in 1260 were probably his tenants or servants. Thomas de Pierpont was probably a relative of Richard de Pierpont who held of Thomas Grelley, the manors of Rumworth and Lostock in Lancashire for a third of a knight’s fee in 1242-3.⁶³ And Ranulph of Heton was perhaps connected to Heaton in Salford Hundred and one of the manors of the barony of Manchester.⁶⁴

Several pieces of evidence point to a close connection between Hugh de Druval and Thomas Grelley. Firstly, the Grelleys had been lords of the manor of Pyrton since the twelfth century.⁶⁵ Pyrton was in southern Oxfordshire, about eleven miles from the Druvals’ manor of Goring. Furthermore the manor was a substantial one which Thomas Grelley held in 1242/3 for four and a half fees *in capite de rege de constabularia de Cestr’*.⁶⁶ Thomas Grelley therefore had a substantial landed interest in southern Oxfordshire within what might be regarded as the immediate neighbourhood of Hugh de Druval.

Hugh de Druval and Thomas Grelley were more than neighbours though. There was also a loose tenurial connection. The junior branch of the Druvals held some land at Clere and Goldor in Pyrton, which was held under the Grelleys. The Robert of Pyrton from whom Thomas Grelley demanded customs and services in 1236 may have been

⁶² *CFR 1230-1231*, 15/68-9, 15/82-3; *CFR 1232-1233*, 17/205, 17/297.

⁶³ *Book of Fees*, p. 1109.

⁶⁴ *VCH Lancashire*, i, p. 326.

⁶⁵ Farrer, *Honours*, p. 251; *VCH Lancashire*, i, p. 328.

⁶⁶ *Book of Fees*, p. 829; Farrer, *Honours*, ii, pp. 250-54.

Robert de Druval.⁶⁷ The hundred rolls show that a fee at Goldor was later held under the lordship of Robert Grelley in 1279.⁶⁸ A branch of the Druvals had thus held land in the same vill as the Grelleys and possibly as tenants of them since the marriage of Hugh brother of Thomas de Druval at the end of the twelfth century.

Ties between the two families went back a long way. In a charter datable to c.1165, Hugh de Druval's ancestor, Thomas de Druval headed a list of witnesses to a charter of Albert III Grelley granting land to Oseney Abbey.⁶⁹ It is potentially significant in assessing the relationship between Hugh de Druval and Thomas Grelley in the mid thirteenth century to note that the Grelleys had close family ties with the Bassets of Bicester with whom Thomas de Druval had been associated in the late twelfth century. Thomas Grelley's grandmother was Isabella Basset, sister of Gilbert Basset of Bicester with whom Hugh's ancestor Thomas had been closely connected nearly a century before.⁷⁰ Isabella was the wife of Albert III Grelley who died about 1180.⁷¹ Their son, Robert (Thomas Grelley's father) was recorded as a minor aged eleven years old in 1184/5 and in 1191 was a ward of his uncle, Gilbert Basset, the man with whom Thomas de Druval had been closely associated.⁷² Thus the connections between the Grelleys and the Druvals extended back over more than three generations. Although there was a tenurial link, the relationship was clearly not a 'feudal' one in the sense that it rested on ties of homage and the power of a lord over his tenant. Rather, this was a relationship

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 252; *CR 1234-1237*, p. 358.

⁶⁸ *RH*, ii, p. 812; Farrer, *Honours*, ii, p. 253.

⁶⁹ *Oseney*, i, no. 13.

⁷⁰ *Basset Charters*, pp. xxxviii-xxxix; *VCH Lancashire*, i, pp. 328-9.

⁷¹ Farrer, *Honours*, p. 251.

⁷² *Rotuli de dominabus*, p. 4; *VCH Lancashire*, i, p. 329.

between a non-resident magnate who had sizeable landed interests in Oxfordshire on one side, and a major local Oxfordshire knight on the other.

Lordship was an important element in the lives of the knightly tenants described here. Sometimes a lordship connection existed within a tenurial context as in the numerous examples of links between tenants of the honour and the earls of Cornwall after 1231. There were also links between knightly tenants of the honour and magnates with whom they had no significant tenurial link; ties which might be characterised as similar to the ‘bastard feudal’ ones of later centuries. In these relationships, neighbourhood appears significant. For some of the knightly families, such as the fitzEllises and the Dayrells, no noticeable lordship connections can be detected from surviving sources, presenting the possibility that they may not have existed. Both the fitzEllis and Dayrell families did, however, maintain close links with other members of local society including tenants of the honour of Wallingford. In maintaining influence in the localities, magnates engaged in a range of different relationships with individuals and communities. Among tenants of the honour of Wallingford, these relationships could often be within a tenurial context. It is likely that the earls of Cornwall and other magnates valued connections with the knightly families discussed here because they were a part of strong local networks, just as they in turn valued their associations with the powerful that helped their own standing in local society. It is to these local networks that attention will now be turned.

6.3 THE COMMUNITY OF THE HONOUR AND OTHER SOCIAL NETWORKS

Historians have understood honours to be not only units of lordship, but also communities with a sense of identity and close ‘horizontal’ links between members as well as ties with the lord.⁷³ It is this sense of a living community that has been thought to have diminished most from the late twelfth century, even if the feudal rights and exactions lingered on.⁷⁴ Although the evidence is sparse, a few sources suggest that the honour of Wallingford arguably continued to have a strong sense of identity through much of the thirteenth century. For some knightly tenants at least, the honour appears to have been one important focus of loyalty, but it was only one element of the *milieu* in which they lived; which encompassed a wide range links of different kinds. Recent studies of such people have emphasised the primary importance of those living in closest proximity to them; the household, the parish, and the immediate neighbourhood were the areas where Wallingford tenants can be expected to have had the strongest connections.⁷⁵ In some instances these reinforced those of the honour, while in others they did not. Knightly tenants, as we have seen, were also involved in affairs on a broader stage outside the honour. Tenants’ connections at the level of the county will be examined here, as will connections in urban economic centres which were both parts of the social world of Wallingford knights. Finally, this section will address the broader horizons of the knights of the honour and consider the evidence of a much wider frame of reference and connections beyond the locality.

⁷³ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 58-59; Crouch, *Birth of Nobility*, pp. 265-270; Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 146-150.

⁷⁴ Carpenter, ‘Second Century’, pp. 43-47.

⁷⁵ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 203-4; Polden, ‘Social Networks’, pp. 376-383.

6.3.1 Honorial Identity

The foundation of the college at St Nicholas's chapel in 1278 was infused with connotations of the community of the honour and its past. Many of the witnesses were from families that had been tenants of the honour for a century or more. Edmund made the grant for the souls of his mother and father, looking back to the more immediate past and appealing to the memories of the tenants, many of whom would have served Earl Richard during their careers. The charter linked Edmund's family to the tenants families and to a place of apparent significance to them all. The castle was the meeting place of the honorial court and the centre of the honour. Its chapel had been founded by Miles Crispin and was supported by three prebends; the churches of North Stoke, Chalgrove, and All Saints in Wallingford, land at Newnham Murren and Great Haseley, and a mill outside the south gate of Wallingford.⁷⁶ Earl Edmund substantially enlarged the foundation making it a college of sixteen people; a master, five chaplains, six clerks and four acolytes, or choristers, and gave an additional £40 a year to support them. It is possible that the chapel had long been the venue for liturgical celebrations attended by knights of the honour when attending sessions of the honour court. The witness list of the 1278 charter made up entirely of lay knights might suggest that part of Edmund's motivation was to provide an even more impressive backdrop to these honorial occasions. A central but somewhat nebulous aspect of the community brought out by the charter therefore seems to have been knowledge of a shared past.

⁷⁶ Roffe, 'Wallingford in Domesday', p. 36; *Rot. Chart.*, i, pp. 75, 81, 118, 200; *CRR*, i, p. 415.

Knowledge of the honour's past may well have had a significant effect on the way in which tenants perceived their own place within the honour, and on their social and cultural assumptions about what being a tenant of the honour meant. Attempting to assess such intangible things is almost impossible given the nature of the evidence, but there are a few pieces of evidence that reveal much about the existence of a consciousness of the honour and its past.

The first of these is found in a case heard before the king's court in 1184 dealing with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the church at Watlington in southern Oxfordshire.⁷⁷ Oseney Abbey claimed the right of advowson of the church arguing that the church had been granted to them by their founder, Robert II d'Oilly. The record of this case, preserved in the cartulary of the abbey, states that 'knights of the county of Oxford and clergy of the deanery and knights of the honour of Wallingford call to mind that the church of Watlington is not, nor should be, nor ever was, of the prebend of Wallingford; because Miles Crispin, who made the prebends, never held in the land of Watlington, nor is it of that barony'.⁷⁸ Another version of this record, contained in the thirteenth-century Cotton Vitellius MS. E. xv, contains a longer account of the jury's testimony, adding that after Miles's death, his wife Matilda daughter of Robert I d'Oilly married Brian of Wallingford and Robert II d'Oilly recovered her fee of Watlington.⁷⁹ The names of the jurors were then listed, with the knights listed first: Thomas de Druval, Robert de Mara, Ruelent d'Anvers, Geoffrey de Bella Aqua, Alan fitz Anfrid, Robert of Wheatfield the

⁷⁷ Oseney, iv, no. 385.

⁷⁸ Ibid.: *Milites de comitatu Oxon', et clerici de archidiaconatu et milites de honore Walingforde recordantur quod ecclesia de Watlinton non est, nec esse debet, nec, unquam fuit, de prebenda de Walingforde; quia Milo Crispinus, qui prebendas fecit, nunquam quicquam habuit in terra de Watlinton, nec de baronia illa est.*

⁷⁹ Ibid.; BL: Cotton Vitellius MS. E.xv, fol. 22.

then sheriff, Henry of Ewelme, Roger son of Alfred, William de Bruges, Nicholas d'Oilly and Jordan de Valognes. Eight of these eleven were tenants of the honour; Henry of Ewelme, William de Bruges and Nicholas d'Oilly are not known to have held of the honour, but were knights of the locality. The clergy were then listed, many of whom have the same toponyms as some of the knights implying they were from the same settlements as the knights.

The prebend of Wallingford referred to here is most likely associated with the chapel of St Nicholas. Again therefore, the knights of the honour appear to have been aware of the history of the honour and knowledgeable of it. This account demonstrates that the knights of the honour of Wallingford were expected to be aware of events that had taken place eighty years earlier, and that they were able to provide a detailed, and so far as can be verified, accurate account of the descent of the honour and the circumstances of Watlington. Of course, locality was also important in this case, and the jurors were selected on the basis of their local knowledge. It is also not possible to tell from the record how widespread this knowledge was within the jury and how far they relied on written documentation now lost that may have been available to them. Despite these reservations, the record implies firstly that the jury was summoned in order to provide this kind of information and secondly that tenants of the honour had a good knowledge of Miles Crispin, Robert d'Oilly and Brian and Matilda of Wallingford. Certainly, Thomas de Druval, Robert de la Mare, Ruelent Danvers, and Roger son of Alfred were representatives of families that had held their land of the honour since the time of Miles Crispin. Members of the Druval, la Mare, and Danvers families witnessed Edmund's 1278 charter. Their own family histories were therefore closely linked to that

of the Crispins, d'Oillys and the honour of Wallingford. This was a period of growing concern for lineage and patrimony among the knightly class. It is likely that knowledge of how their ancestors had gained their land would have been passed through the generations, and this knowledge was linked with the lords of the land they held. Such knowledge was of practical importance too in 1184, as it would be later, as the case itself shows; the claim of Oseney Abbey to the advowson of the church of Watlington depended on the arrangements of earlier generations.

The second important piece of evidence for contemporary knowledge of the honour of Wallingford's past is the letter accompanying the return made to the great inquest of 1212 by the constable of Wallingford.⁸⁰ This document, the original of which survives preserved in the Public Record Office in a very rough and idiosyncratic administrative hand, contains a detailed account of the descent of the honour of Wallingford from the Norman Conquest down to 1154.⁸¹ It then goes on to describe the history of the honour's demesne land through the later twelfth century. Appended to the main letter, in a similar hand is a list of the tenants of the honour and the knight service each owed in 1212. This is a slightly different source from the previous one as it is administrative and reflects knowledge on a much narrower basis than the evidence just discussed for 1184. The letter simply shows that the constable, who appears to have been administering the honour at this time, was aware of the history of the honour and its demesne land. The return was evidently sent to the exchequer where it was kept afterwards, so it can only prove that these two parties were aware of the facts it relates. Nevertheless it is significant evidence because it demonstrates that knowledge of the

⁸⁰ *Book of Fees*, i, pp. 116-120. The account of the honour's origins given in this letter were discussed in chapters 1 and 2, above.

⁸¹ PRO: E 198/2/6.

honour's past development was central to its active administration at the start of the thirteenth century. Both the king and the constable had very practical reasons to maintain a record of the honour's creation and its demesne manors. The result was a clear knowledge that could be committed to written record of the honour's creation and development over time. The 1184 jury shows us that this knowledge was not limited to a few clerks in the honorial administration, though it is impossible to tell whether both the knights and the constable were consulting written records. It may be just as likely that the constable made enquiries with the honour's knights. Either way, the 1212 return is evidence that the history of the honour was known in Wallingford, and at the Exchequer and this knowledge of the past provides the context for the common activity of the members of the honorial community during this period.

A third piece of evidence that hints at the importance of honorial identity is that copies of the survey undertaken of the honour for the inquisition post mortem at the death of Edmund of Cornwall in 1300 were preserved locally. One descended to the Rede family and was copied into the secular cartulary compiled for Edmund Rede in 1444 and kept by his family at Boarstall in Buckinghamshire until the twentieth century. Another is preserved in the Bodleian library.⁸² This suggests a degree of local interest in the honour, while the ability to undertake such a survey itself demonstrates the honour's continued importance at the end of the century.

There is evidence to suggest that vertical links between the tenants of Wallingford and their lords remained strong throughout the thirteenth century, and that among the community of the honour as a whole there was a common awareness of the existence of the honour and its past. There was, for some people at least, an honorial identity in this

⁸² *CIPM*, iii, p. 480; Salter, 'Honour of Wallingford', pp. 295-6.

period. It now remains to investigate how the community actually operated and to examine the evidence for actual interaction among members of the honorial community.

6.3.2 Tenants and the honorial community

The horizontal ties between members of the honour may partly have been born out of the sense of identity we have shown to have existed, but they also owed much to geography and the relatively compact nature of the honour that encouraged the overlap of ties of locality with ties of tenurial lordship and honorial identity.

The existence of horizontal ties between tenants of the honour will be approached from two main directions. On the one hand there are factors that can be said to have engendered collective action on the part of the tenants. These include participation in the government of the honour and operation of its extensive jurisdictional powers, and the significance of an active and influential honour court for tenants. On the other hand, evidence of the decisions of tenants with regard to the honourial community can be examined through analysis of the marriages they made, their charters, and patterns of local religious patronage.

The administrative structure of the honour described in the previous chapter must be viewed as an important potential facilitator of collective action. As was pointed out, the extensive jurisdictional privileges that the honour enjoyed in this period which placed it outside of much county jurisdiction would have made the honour and its officers an important element in the lives not just of knightly tenants but also of all free men. As was shown above, all interaction with royal government within the manors of the honour of Wallingford took place through the honour, its steward and bailiffs, rather than through

the county sheriffs. For the peasantry, this would have been most clearly felt in the responsibilities of the steward and bailiffs for holding the view of frankpledge and as the main enforcers of criminal law in that jurisdiction. For the knightly tenants of the honour, the evidence suggests that they were involved in operating this system, as officers, and as jurors, just as they and their counterparts were involved in the government of the shires.

The importance of tenants of the honour in filling the roles of stewards and bailiffs was discussed above. It is likely that a sense of honorial identity was gained by those who held office in the honour's administration, though in itself this is not provable. Fulk of Rycote, Robert Malet and Walter of Aylesbury, the tenants of the honour who held the office of steward in the second half of the thirteenth century may have been concerned more with their ties of lordship to the earls of Cornwall than to their fellow tenants. And yet there is much to suggest that their connection to the honorial community was important. It is striking that although the earls of Cornwall used professional administrators who were paid a salary, stewards of the honour were in several cases, also tenants. If the honour of Wallingford did constitute a community of some significance for its members and the honour court was an active institution at its centre, then the value to the lord of the honour in appointing a member of this community to preside over it would be clear.

In addition to office-holding in the honour's administration, the jurisdictional position of the honour meant that its knightly tenants appear to have been sometimes expected to serve together on juries. In the royal courts it was usual for assize jurors to be knights of the locality, and so in areas such as southern Oxfordshire where there was a

large concentration of Wallingford fees, many juries contained a number of Wallingford tenants. There were also, however, specific instances where a jury of knights of the honour was summoned. The earliest recorded case is the jury of 1184 called to examine the ownership of the advowson of the church of Watlington discussed above.⁸³

The honour's functioning as a legal bailiwick is demonstrated by an example that dates from the early years of the minority of King Henry III, while it was in royal hands. Two people, William Fiercop and Matilda of Northampton, were accused of murdering a certain Nicholas Drye and were imprisoned at Wallingford. They made a fine with the king, which was entered on the fine roll on 8 August 1218, of 20s. 'so that they be handed over on bail to twelve law-worthy men of the bailiwick of the honour of Wallingford' who were to act as pledges.⁸⁴ This shows that the honour formed a legal area much like a hundred, and that in many routine activities, people from honour were expected to take collective action. Thus on a very ordinary level, people living within the honour were treated as a distinct group, and this position in relation to the law must have had an effect on the way they perceived the honour as a focus of identity.

The honour's jurisdictional position also meant that the administration of criminal law within the honour required the involvement of the knightly tenants and officers of the honour. The description of the process by which a thief was dealt with at the village of Chesterton in 1254 was recorded because the Oxfordshire county coroner brought a complaint against the conduct of the steward of Wallingford, Peter of Ashridge, who took money from the coroner for doing his office in the honour's jurisdiction.⁸⁵ The involvement of men of the honour in the incident is significant. The coroner testified that

⁸³ *Oseney*, iv, no. 385.

⁸⁴ *CFR 1217-1218*, 2/176.

⁸⁵ *Select Cases*, pp. 107-8. See above, p. 180.

a thief had fled to the church of Chesterton in Oxfordshire and the lord of Chesterton had called the coroner to execute his office. The coroner had stated that representatives of the nearest vills of the hundred should be summoned and that as Chesterton was part of the honour of Wallingford, he told the lord of Chesterton that representatives of the townships of the honour should come as well. In the presence of this gathering, the thief abjured the realm. The coroner was keen to emphasise that he had taken the honour of Wallingford's jurisdiction into account because he was justifying his claim that Peter of Ashridge punished him for infringing that jurisdiction. Peter complained that these events had been to the disparagement of his lord and his honour of Wallingford (*domini sui et honoris sui de Walingford*'), emphasising that the honour had an identity with a clear set of privileges to be defended in their own right.

The sense of collective identity that might be engendered by the honour's unusual jurisdictional position was clearly not part of the kind of honorial identity that Stenton and other historians have meant, though it may well have been an important additional factor in creating and preserving the honour of Wallingford's character. Stenton saw the most important element in building and sustaining an *esprit de corps* as the honour court, where the lord of the honour dispensed justice.⁸⁶ Despite there being insufficient evidence for systematic analysis of the honour court of Wallingford, it was shown above that the court retained a civil jurisdiction and that throughout the thirteenth century tenants of the honour brought their disputes to the court.⁸⁷ This fact itself is evidence that the honour was an important focus for its tenants, as there must have been an element of choice on the part of those bringing cases, and perhaps explains why the special sessions

⁸⁶ Stenton, *First Century*, pp. 43-6; Crouch, *Birth of Nobility*, pp. 280-281.

⁸⁷ See above, chapter 4.2.2.

of the eyre at Wallingford and High Wycombe attracted more litigation from the people of those towns than from the honourial community at large.

There is also substantial anecdotal evidence from charter witness lists to show that tenants did attend the honour court at Wallingford, and that they used it as an occasion on which to issue charters, well into the thirteenth century. In a charter datable to circa 1265, Emma, daughter of William fitzEllis and widow of Geoffrey de St Martin granted land and animals in the manor of Oakley, which her father held of the honour of Wallingford, to Milo son of Milo Balistarius of Brill. The charter was witnessed by Sir Richard de Turri, Peter of Ashridge, John fitzNigel, John Morel, Nicholas le Brun, Robert Ferebras, William son of Simon of Brill, Peter his brother, ‘and all the court of Wallingford’.⁸⁸

There are other charter witness lists that look like honorial gatherings, though they do not specifically say so. A charter of Beatrice de Terays dated at Oxford on the Saturday after the feast of the Invention of the Holy Cross 1269 released her right in various pieces of land in Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Essex to Sir Robert de Briwes.⁸⁹ The land in question included the manor of Rissington Basset in Gloucestershire which was an outlying manor held of the honour of Wallingford by her father. Geoffrey, steward of the honour of Wallingford appears as the second name on the witness list, and is followed by six knightly tenants of the honour. Thus seven of the twenty witnesses to this charter were connected with the honour of Wallingford, while

⁸⁸ *Boarstall*, no. 280. None of the named witnesses appear held land directly of the honour, though Richard de Turri and Peter of Ashridge were involved with the earl of Cornwall’s administration.

⁸⁹ *CChR 1257-1300*, p. 123. Her charter was attested by Sir John de la Lynd, Sir Geoffrey, steward of the honour of Wallingford, Sir Alan son of Roald, Sir Thomas de Valognes, Sir John of Suleham, Sir Fulk of Rycote, Sir Hugh Druval, Elias of Wheatfield, Fulk de Lacy, Simon de Nethercot, Robert son of John of Boritton, Henry son of Robert, Gerard de Sloutre, Robert son of Mary of the same, Robert de Fonte of, John de Marisco of Wyk, John de Lung of the same, Adam de Hiccumbe, Thomas his son, and Thomas L... of Wyk.

many of the other witnesses were connected directly with the manors being dealt with by the charter. The fact that this meeting was at Oxford rather than Wallingford suggests this was not a formal meeting of the honour court, but shows that tenants of the honour did meet at Oxford, the principal economic and commercial centre of the region, and where many tenants of the honour of Wallingford had dealings. It represents a substantial gathering of the steward and principal knightly tenants of the honour to witness the transfer of rights to land within, as well as outside, the honour.

The honour of Wallingford therefore had an identity that arose from its role as an important area of royal and tenurial jurisdiction, and this common identity was embodied in the court of the honour which met at Wallingford, heard disputes between tenants and served on some occasions as the venue for transfers of land by tenants. Little more is known about the meetings of the honour court, but it is possible there was a great deal more about the court that might further serve to develop a sense of community. If suitors stayed at Wallingford for a period either side of the meeting of the court, and the knightly tenants hunted, feasted and worshipped together on these occasions, this would have further contributed to a sense of community among the tenants. The foundation of a collegiate church with choir at the chapel of St Nicholas in 1278 before an assembly of tenants perhaps suggests a liturgical dimension to the honorial community; the earl may have been improving a venue already significant for the honour's community. It is difficult to argue this one way or the other, but it is clearly possible to speculate about a number of ways that community could be fostered within the honour. Indeed, the evidence that points to the existence of an honorial community is strikingly similar to the important foundations of a sense of county community; namely the county's role as an

area of governmental jurisdiction, and the significance of meetings of members of the county community at the county court.

A certain amount of awareness and solidarity with the honorial community is demonstrated in some of the charters produced by tenants, especially in the twelfth century. Emma fitzEllis's charter, witnessed at the court of Wallingford, provides one such example from the late date of the mid-thirteenth century. Another example is that used by Stenton to demonstrate the community spirit in existence in honours like Wallingford, which is a charter of John Basset of Oakley, addressed to 'Henry, king of the English ... and all his peers of Wallingford'.⁹⁰ Similarly, a charter datable to 1182x1188 issued by Gilbert Basset of Bicester⁹¹ granting his vill of Uxbridge, held of the honour of Wallingford, a Thursday market opens with the interesting phrase, 'Gilbert Basset to all the barons of the honour of Wallingford and to all his neighbours and friends, greeting.'⁹²

These examples are few in number, but they point to an awareness of the honorial community in the later twelfth century. Nevertheless, before taking these as representative, their circumstances should be examined. It is striking that examples cited come from the Basset family. Although John Basset of Oakley and Gilbert Basset of Bicester were from different branches of the family and so were only distant cousins, it is quite likely that both had particular reasons to identify so closely with the honour. Firstly, when Gilbert granted his market to Uxbridge in 1182x1188, he was steward of

⁹⁰ Stenton, *First Century*, p. 59: *Henrico regi Anglorum ... et omnibus comparibus suis de Gwalingeford*.

⁹¹ Gilbert Basset was the head of the Bicester branch of the Basset family who were the largest holders of land in the honour and stewards for an extended period under Henry II. The Bassets of Oakley who were holders of two manors at Oakley and Ipsden were distantly related.

⁹² *Basset Charters*, no. 184: *Gilbertus Basset omnibus baronibus de honore Warenges et vicinis suis et amicis salutem*.

the honour, having followed his father in the role. This branch of the family was close to Henry II, having risen to prominence through royal service. With the honour in royal hands but administered by the Bassets, in many ways this family appears to have treated the honour very much as part of their own power-base; a source of influence and personnel that they otherwise lacked. This provides some context to Gilbert's charter addressing 'the barons of the honour of Wallingford'. He was one of them, but he was also very much their leader at the time, both as steward of the honour, and as the wealthiest and most influential member of the honorial community. As such, this address to the tenants might be compared as much to a great lord addressing his own barons, though in this case the possessive being confined to 'neighbours and friends'.

The Bassets of Bicester and Thomas de Druval of Goring had a connection in the twelfth century. A total of five charters issued by either Thomas senior or Gilbert Basset, were witnessed by Thomas de Druval.⁹³ In four of the witness lists, his is the first attestation. In the one charter in which he was not first among the list of witnesses, Gilbert Basset's 'foundation' charter of Bicester Priory datable to 1182x1185, he attested second after Robert of Wheatfield the sheriff of Oxfordshire, and ahead of Gilbert's wife, Egelina, and other members of Gilbert's family. Indeed, Thomas de Druval leads the attestations to three charters relating to a family transaction between the sons of Thomas Basset. Druval was first among five named witnesses to a deed of Thomas Basset granting to his son Alan the manor of Compton Basset in Wiltshire, and in another deed

⁹³ *Basset Charters*, nos. 177, 178, 182, 184, 186. Thomas and Hugh de Druval witnessed nos. 187, 188 and 189, but these are later forgeries, the witness lists of which may have been derived from 186.

with a similar witness list in which Gilbert, Thomas Basset's son, makes a grant of Compton Basset at the request of his mother and father to Alan Basset.⁹⁴

The three Compton Basset charters are intimate and domestic in nature; apart from the witnesses no reference is made to outside parties. Thomas de Druval also witnessed Gilbert's much more public 1182x1188 charter to the men of Uxbridge. All this would seem to suggest that Thomas was a member of Gilbert Basset's household, and a prominent one at that; possibly his steward, though there is no evidence of this title being used. Gilbert and Thomas Basset therefore seem to have been able to use the honorial community and their fellow tenants in much the same way as a the lord of Wallingford might.

John Basset's address of his charter to his peers of Wallingford, may also be seen as the product of specific circumstances. The Bassets of Oakley and Ipsden were involved in a long-standing dispute with the fitzEllis family of Waterperry over the manor of Oakley itself, which appears to have hinged on the power of the lord of Wallingford to determine the descent of property.⁹⁵ A number of charters survive of royal lords of Wallingford confirming Oakley to the Bassets. John Basset's charter addressed to 'Henry king of the English and to all his peers of Wallingford' seen in this context, could therefore be taken as an attempt to emphasise his claim to tenure as a member of the honorial community to which his ancestor Osmund had owed his tenure. These are speculative considerations, but it is important to bear in mind the specific contexts of these important examples of honorial feeling.

⁹⁴ *Ancient Deeds*, iii, A.4612; A.4847.

⁹⁵ See below, p. 340.

A picture has been built up of an institution that maintained a sense of identity through its administration and its court, as well as through knowledge of the past and possibly connection with the chapel of St Nicholas. Also central to the level of common interaction among knightly tenants would have been the spatial circumstances of tenants, and attention will now be turned to ties of neighbourhood and locality. These ties were not exclusively honorial, and so it is necessary to explore the social milieu of the families as a whole.

6.3.3 Household, Parish and Neighbourhood

The household, the parish and the immediate locality formed interlocking networks of individuals, predominantly of lesser wealth and social importance. A remarkable ‘snapshot’ of the Rycote family’s immediate circle survives in the record of the inquisition of 6 December 1317 to prove that Fulk (III) of Rycote, son of Fulk (II), was of full age so that he could inherit his father’s estate.⁹⁶ Various members of Fulk’s household, neighbours, friends and family testified that they remembered the birth of Fulk on 16 November 1295.

This record gives a detailed picture of the nature of local life. Fulk sent word to other knightly families in neighbouring villages. He ordered a letter to be written to Drew de Barentyn, a fellow tenant of the honour of Wallingford at Chalgrove five miles to the south. Ralph Angevin and Sir Adam le Despenser are both mentioned and both of these were heads of important knightly families like Fulk and connected with the earls of

⁹⁶ *CIPM*, iv, no. 123.

Cornwall.⁹⁷ It is interesting that the relationship between Sir Fulk and Sir Adam is explicitly stated to have rested on the fact that it was Adam's daughter who was married to Fulk and who was giving birth. Connection by marriage was also significant in the Rycote family's evident close connection with the Scalebrokes. Lady Cecily de Scalebrok, described here as Fulk's daughter was probably the wife of Sir William de Scalebrok, who held land in the same parish and who represented Oxfordshire in parliaments of 1298 and 1306.⁹⁸ John de Scalebrok, Fulk's nephew through his daughter's marriage testified that he was Fulk's esquire. Indeed, Fulk's household figures prominently in this source as we might expect considering that it relates to the birth of his son. We also learn that Fulk had a steward, William of Draycot, who was presented with a pair of gloves for the occasion, and whose son, who was apparently one of the godparents⁹⁹ was interestingly named Fulk, perhaps named after his father's lord. If so, this, together with the fact that he was chosen as a godparent suggests a very close relationship between Fulk of Rycote and his steward. We know that William had at least one servant himself, Richard le Lutle who went with Fulk of Draycot to the baptism. Another servant of Fulk of Rycote is mentioned: John atte Watre, whose father died at Thame, the nearby town where there was a great abbey. Whether they were from Thame, we do not know. Others may have been servants, tenants or just neighbours in the parish. Robert the taylor, who says that he remembers the day the younger Fulk of Rycote was born because his daughter married Robert Fouke, servant of Joan de Rale, in Rycote on the same day. And William le Blount says that he remembered the day because his father died in Great Haseley two miles away, where the parish church was.

⁹⁷ Moor, *Knights of Edward I*, i, pp. 277-8.

⁹⁸ Ibid., iv, pp. 223-4.

⁹⁹ Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief*, p. 137.

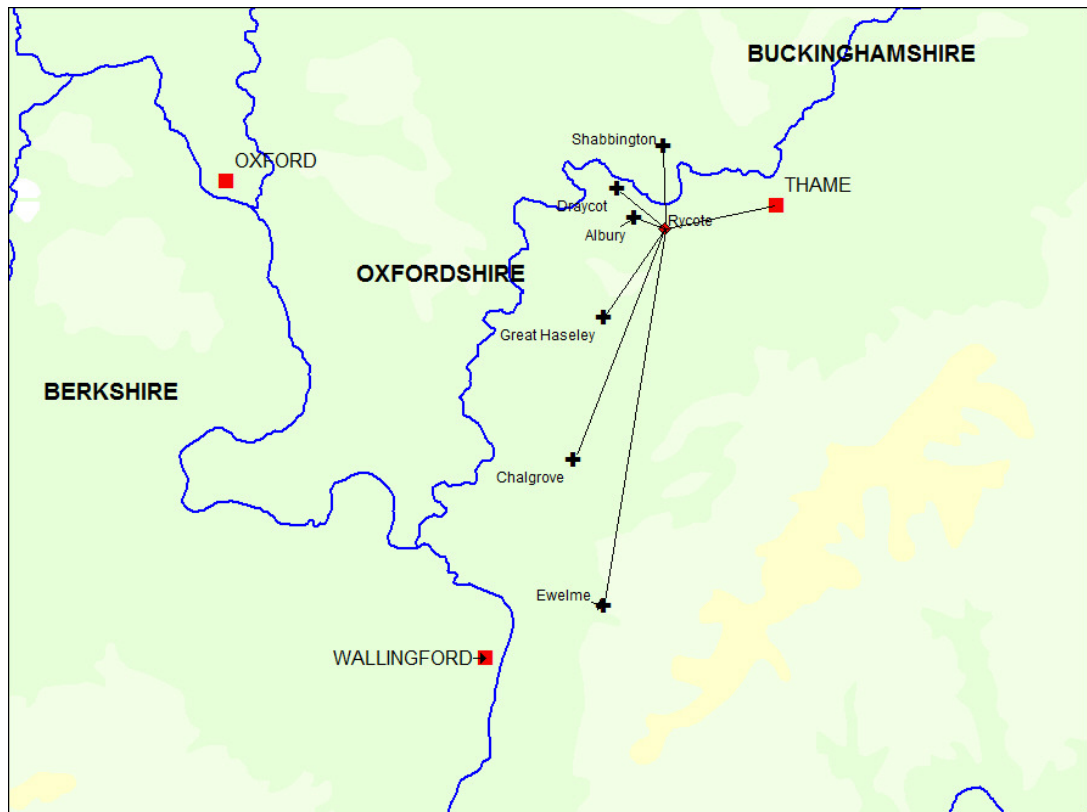


Figure 10. Map showing Rycote and the places mentioned in the proof of age inquest of 1317

Women are much more prominent in this social environment, in a way they were not in the administrative and political circles in which Fulk moved. Joan de Rale, who cannot be identified, was one of the godparents, and Fulk sent his esquire to the neighbouring village of Shabbington to announce to Lady Joan de Grey that his wife had had a son. And we see that Fulk's daughter, Lady Cecily de Scalebrok, travelled with her son to see the new child.¹⁰⁰ Significantly, household, kinship and locality all appear closely linked. Fulk had members of his extended family who were from neighbouring villages serving him in specific offices of steward and esquire, while he was also

¹⁰⁰ Lee, 'A Company of Women and Men', pp. 92-100.

connected through ties of service, neighbourhood and by kinship to a wider range of people around the manor, parish and neighbouring parishes.

Of all the knights of the honour of Wallingford across the period under consideration, most is known about Fulk of Rycote's local connections at the end of the thirteenth century, as a result of the inquest of 1317. The inquest reveals a very local network of contacts that confirms the view put forward by recent historians of the fourteenth and fifteenth century gentry.¹⁰¹ Many of the factors that went towards creating the local focus of gentry life in the later period would also have affected Wallingford tenants in this period. It is logical to conclude that among the people with whom they had the strongest links would be members of their household. Daily interaction and interdependence would have been powerful forces binding the knight with his immediate locality. We have seen how William (I) fitzEllis referred to Siward, his esquire, in the witness list to a charter he issued in c.1200 to St Frideswide's.¹⁰² Similarly, Ralph Chenduit, and probably a good number of other knights, had huntsmen and dogs for hunting.¹⁰³ The Rycotes employed neighbours and tenants in their household. There is also evidence of neighbours acting as attorneys. Fulk (I) had acted as an attorney for Roger Pippard who held in the same parish as we have seen, while Thomas de Bulestrode acted as Ralph Chenduit's wife's attorney in various actions that the Chenduits took in 1242 to secure lands to which Matilda Chenduit had a claim; against John de Gatesden for lands in Hampshire and against John le Sauvage for lands in Nottinghamshire.¹⁰⁴ The identity of Thomas de Bulestrode is uncertain, but he may have originated from the area

¹⁰¹ Coss, *Origins*, 205-6.

¹⁰² *St. Frideswide*, p. 150.

¹⁰³ Paris, *Gesta Abbatum*, i, p. 319; *Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, p. 76; see above, p. 255.

¹⁰⁴ *CRR*, xvii, nos. 1673, 1682.

west of Langley in Hertfordshire, and south-east of Bovingdon, where there is now a Bulestrode Farm at the end of Bulestrode Lane.¹⁰⁵ This would be significant, as it would mean that he was a near neighbour of the Chenduits, holding land no more than two-and-a-half miles away from the Chenduit's main manor at Langley. Thomas de Bulestrode was probably a relative of the Nicholas de Bulestrode who witnessed a charter of Ralph (II) Chenduit in favour of Missenden Abbey before 1229, and who witnessed alongside Ralph (II) in a number of other Missenden charters.¹⁰⁶ Witnessing charters together, attesting gifts, and acting as a representative in a legal action all demonstrate a very close relationship that seems to have existed between neighbouring families over more than one generation.

Social connections at this very local level were probably an important aspect of the power of individuals of knightly rank. It may well have been their ability to carry the support of neighbours and dependent tenants that made them valuable agents of royal and seigneurial government and men through whom magnates could exert influence at a local level. An example of the way in which social networks at the level of household, parish and neighbourhood could be harnessed to exert raw power in the form of violence can be seen in 1281. Ralph Dayrell, and twenty-seven other men were pardoned by the king in October that year for the death of Master Peter de Radnor.¹⁰⁷ Among the twenty-seven men, two, Stephen Page, and possibly William Paysh, were most probably tenants of Ralph sharing as they did a surname with John Page who was one of his tenants in

¹⁰⁵ This may be the Bulestrode family that were lords of Upton in Chalvey, near modern-day Slough. Nigel Saul, personal communication.

¹⁰⁶ *Missenden*, ii, no. 389

¹⁰⁷ *CPR 1272-1281*, p. 460.

Lillingstone in 1279.¹⁰⁸ Another, Elias of Tingewick was a neighbour and close associate of Ralph. He was a forest official in the royal forests of Whittlewood, Silverstone and Salcey (which lay around Lillingstone Dayrell), and had been removed from office in 1258 for his excess, and in 1259 went into hiding as a result of allegations made against him.¹⁰⁹ In 1263 he had been appointed steward of Luffield Priory, which was in the parish of Lillingstone Dayrell, and in 1265 was granted the keepership of Whittlewood forest for life. He appears to have been a violent man, once again being imprisoned in 1276 at Devizes for delinquencies at Newport Pagnell, for which he was pardoned.¹¹⁰ Ralph seems to have been a close associate of his throughout his later career. They appear together in the witness lists of at least seven charters between 1266 and c.1284.¹¹¹ In a further indication of the way in which neighbourhood, parish and manorial lordship could interact and strengthen one another, Ralph of Tingewick, a probable kinsman of Elias, had been appointed rector of Lillingstone Dayrell in 1267; a position in the gift of Ralph Dayrell.¹¹² Among the twenty-eight men pardoned in 1281, there was also a Robert of Tingewick, probably another kinsman of Elias. Local associations were therefore crucial in the peacetime actions that lay behind this pardon.

Although the honour of Wallingford's lands were not contiguous, the bulk of its fees and tenants lived sufficiently close together for the more everyday ties of neighbourhood to play an important part in reinforcing ties of community among tenants of the honour. In the immediate vicinity of the castle, in southern Oxfordshire, especially, tenants witnessed each other's charters, appeared together on juries and

¹⁰⁸ *RH*, ii, 340.

¹⁰⁹ *Luffield Charters*, ii, p. xxii.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Oseney*, v, no. 797A (dated 26 December 1266); *Luffield Charters*, ii, nos. 474, 380, 399, 536, 550, 594.

¹¹² *Luffield Charters*, ii, no. 392.

intermarried. Among those mentioned in the 1317 Rycote proof of age inquest, Drew de Barentyn of Chalgrove, Ralph le Angevin and Lady Joan de Grey of Shabbington were all tenants of the honour who were also resident in the area surrounding Rycote. On the other hand, many of those who testified were not tenants of the honour but families with other tenurial connections such as Sir Adam le Despenser of Ewelme. The inquisition also implies that the elder Fulk's daughter, Cecily was married to Sir William de Scalebroke, a knight who held land in the same parish and who represented Oxfordshire in parliaments of 1298 and 1306. This does of course suggest that tenurial ties were less important than those of neighbourhood, but it is equally clear that the nature of the honour's geography helped to promote association between tenants of the same honour. Overlapping ties of this kind can also be seen in the witness lists of charters of Wallingford tenants, as in that issued by William fitzEllis on the occasion of his daughter's marriage to Alan de Maydewell, where four of William's fellow tenants of the honour of Wallingford were among the fourteen named local individuals who attested the grant of a *maritagium*.¹¹³ As Holt pointed out, the overlapping of family, neighbourhood and tenurial ties was a common feature of English local society with each supporting and strengthening the other; close ties of neighbourhood among Wallingford tenants are no doubt one reason for the honour's continued vitality in the thirteenth century.¹¹⁴

¹¹³ *Boarstall*, no. 616.

¹¹⁴ Holt, *Northerners*, p. 49.

6.3.4 Towns

If neighbourhood played such a role in strengthening ties between tenants, then the position of the town of Wallingford must be considered in the same light. The urban dimension to the honour of Coventry was significant in the early thirteenth century, though due to the lack of evidence, links between urban and rural elites have often been overlooked.¹¹⁵ In assessing the extent of an honorial community, the importance of Wallingford as an urban centre must be considered. The town of Wallingford declined in economic importance relative to Oxford over the medieval period but was still a sizeable urban centre in the thirteenth century with 334 inhabitants recorded in 1235.¹¹⁶ The manor of Clapcot, which was part of the honour and lay adjacent to the castle on its north side contained the holdings of people with specific functions within the castle. It also contained land that supported knights of the honour.¹¹⁷ Stephen Chenduit, who was close to Earl Richard appears to have acquired land at Clapcot which he sold, interestingly, to the earl's baker, John de Fraunton in 1267/8.¹¹⁸ Domesday Book recorded a number of manors in the surrounding countryside that had appurtenant houses in Wallingford and many of these became part of the honour of Wallingford. There is no certain evidence of links between the thirteenth century holders of these manors and the town of Wallingford, but early records of merchants present in Wallingford analysed by N.M. Herbert show that in 1280 for example, there were *practionarii* from a number of surrounding villages including the Wallingford manors of Newnham Murren, Stoke, Goring, Ipsden, Berrick

¹¹⁵ Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood, Locality*, ch. 2; Coss, 'Hilton, Lordship and the Culture of the Gentry', p. 50.

¹¹⁶ Herbert, 'The Borough of Wallingford', p. 147.

¹¹⁷ Keats-Rohan, 'Genesis', p. 61.

¹¹⁸ *CPEJ*, i, p. 214.

Salome, and Oakley.¹¹⁹ That traders from these manors that were part of the honour were present at Wallingford shows that the town's trading area still covered the heart of the honour, and it is quite possible that knightly tenants owned property there. The ownership of property in Wallingford and Clapcot would provide further opportunities for interaction and help to explain the vitality of the honorial community.

Urban links were not restricted to Wallingford. For the many of the knightly tenants of the honour, the most plentiful evidence of urban interests comes from Oxford, the major economic, religious and political centre of the region. Oxford society seems to have been significant for the Rycote family. Their property there was mentioned in the last chapter, and suggests extensive involvement in the town. This was no doubt encouraged by their involvement in county administration as well as by commercial concerns. Fulk (I) witnessed at least one charter, and Fulk (II) witnessed three and issued three charters relating to Oxford, alongside leading members of Oxford's urban elite.¹²⁰ The earliest of these was in 1220/1221 which was issued by the prioress of St Frideswide, and was witnessed by Vivian son of Ralph, the sheriff, burgesses of Oxford such as Robert Owen and Geoffrey the goldsmith, as well as Fulk.¹²¹ He continued to witness charters alongside various mayors of Oxford, their bailiffs and burgesses such as Robert Owen, Geoffrey the goldsmith and others from 1258 to 1275. For instance, in October 1259, he witnessed alongside Peter Foliot, the sheriff of Oxford, Adam Feteplace the mayor of Oxford, Geoffrey of Hinksey and John Pady, the reeves, and other burgesses

¹¹⁹ Herbert, 'The Borough of Wallingford', p. 137, n. 22.

¹²⁰ *Oseney*, i, nos. 158, 376, iv, nos. 69, 136A; *St John the Baptist*, no. 215.

¹²¹ *St Frideswide*, no. 954; also *Oseney*, iv, no. 69.

including Walter the goldsmith, Geoffrey the goldsmith, Geoffrey le Mercer, Henry Owen.¹²²

The only known charters issued by Fulk (II) of Rycote, preserved in the cartulary of the hospital of St John the Baptist, both relate to property in Oxford.¹²³ The first, datable to 1268/69, states that Fulk will warrant a corner messuage in the town to the hospital against Henry son of Henry Simeon, whose father had earlier granted it to the hospital.¹²⁴ This was witnessed by Nicholas de Kingston, mayor of Oxford, Henry Owen, John de Eu, bailiff of Oxford, Geoffrey of Hinksey (over the Thames from Oxford), Walter the goldsmith, Geoffrey the goldsmith and others. In the second of these charters, datable to 1274/75, Fulk quitclaims rights to the ‘corner hall’ (*aula angulari*) in ‘Kibaldstrete’, formerly of Henry Simeon. This charter was also witnessed by Nicholas de Kingston the mayor, Geoffrey the goldsmith, John de Eu the bailiff, Walter the goldsmith, William the spicer, William de Eu, Philip de Eu, John Filekyng, William Pille and others.¹²⁵ The similarity of the witness lists suggests that the dates of issue may have been closer together. These charters represent an important urban dimension to the social activity of the Rycotes, and suggest that Fulk (II) had a degree of influence in Oxford. Although the evidence is patchy, it is likely that links with towns were more common. These links may have been related to trade and commerce, but they were also social.

¹²² *Oseney*, i, no. 158.

¹²³ There is also a record of a sale of rents to Oseney in 1273/74; *Oseney*, i, no. 376.

¹²⁴ *St John the Baptist*, i, no. 214. For Henry Simeon’s earlier gift, see no. 213.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 215.

6.3.5 County Communities

Much has been written in recent years about the concept of the county community in the middle ages. Christine Carpenter argued in 1994 that the term should be removed from the historians' vocabulary entirely as it was too vague a concept to be of any use and risked distorting reality by forcing us to see society through the prism of the royal government records, and obscuring a whole range of other important social networks.¹²⁶ Indeed, the honour of Wallingford was geographically spread across many counties and administratively outside much of county government. Nevertheless, the county cannot be underestimated as an important focus for collective identity. John Maddicott has shown that from the early thirteenth century, county communities were interacting with King John, reflecting local opinion and purchasing favours.¹²⁷ Coss too has questioned Carpenter's attack on the concept of the county community but differs from Maddicott in seeing county communities of John's reign including magnates and bishops as well as local knights and free men, rather than communities of local gentry interest.¹²⁸ What can be said of the involvement of knights of the honour of Wallingford in county communities?

There are two main areas in which involvement with the county and its community might be detected among these knightly families: property and involvement in local government. In terms property, holdings in more than one county were common among tenants of the honour. Of the five families used as case-studies, only one (the Druvals) appear to have held land in only one county, while four held lands in two or

¹²⁶ Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', pp. 341-5.

¹²⁷ Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community', pp. 25-65; Maddicott, *Origins of the English Parliament*, p. 137.

¹²⁸ Coss, *Origins*, pp.119-121.

more. The fitzEllis family held manors in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire, and for a time, Essex. Meanwhile, the Chenduits had lands in Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. Indeed across the honour more broadly, just as tenure of multiple lords was common, so too was tenure in multiple counties. Of course the exception was one manor families like the Druvals who held a manor in only one county, but even in these instances land could be held in other counties. The Rycotes had only one manor at Rycote in Oxfordshire but they had other rents and small parcels of land in Buckinghamshire.¹²⁹

It was remarked above that being tenants of the honour of Wallingford did not preclude the extensive involvement in the local administration of royal government that was common among this social group. This was carried out through the county, and this sort of business brought knights into contact with fellow knights of the county and brought them together at the administrative and political centre of the county on a regular basis. It is here that we might reasonably expect a sense of community among fellow knights of a county to develop. Ralph (II) Dayrell, it is shown above, served on juries in at least seventeen separate cases between 1200 and 1233, most of which were in Middlesex where he was lord of Hanworth, but a significant minority were in Buckinghamshire where he held Lillingstone Dayrell. His son Henry served as sheriff of Middlesex in 1246.¹³⁰ The administrative activities of a local knight, sitting on grand assize juries, acting as coroners and sheriffs, and as justices of gaol delivery, all brought him into contact with fellow county knights on a frequent basis. Adrian Jobson has analysed the two grand assize juries on which Fulk (II) of Rycote sat in 1261, and shown

¹²⁹ See above, chapter 5.1.1.

¹³⁰ See above, chapter 5.4.5.

that the knights were drawn from the whole of Oxfordshire.¹³¹ One of these cases dealt with a dispute at Iffley, only nine miles from Rycote, and near Oxford.¹³² The other involved Lyneham in north-west Oxfordshire, twenty-six miles away as the crow flies.¹³³ In part, as Jobson indicates, the wide area from which grand assize jurors were chosen was a result of the reduced numbers of knights active by 1261; a situation which, as various historians have pointed out, would have served to increase the status of the remaining knights like Fulk (II) of Rycote.¹³⁴ It may not have greatly changed the wide geographical scope of activity for knights involved in this kind of work; in 1223 Fulk (I) of Rycote had been appointed to an assize of novel disseisin involving a tenement in Chipping Norton, near Lyneham.¹³⁵

All knights and free men had some responsibility at county level as jurors, though many juries other than the grand assize were usually based on areas smaller than a county. For some knights, perhaps those described in contemporary sources as *buzones* of the county, association would have been even stronger.¹³⁶ William (II) fitzEllis was active in judicial proceedings, was among a number of knights charged with collecting the fifteenth of 1225 in Oxfordshire, and played a leading role at the Oxfordshire county court.¹³⁷ Fulk (II) of Rycote served as coroner, as sheriff, and received, as we have seen, a number of commissions afterwards, along with other former sheriffs. For men such as these, the county must have been an important part, not just of the administrative framework in which they worked, but also their social environment.

¹³¹ Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre Roll of 1261', vol. i, pp. 165-171.

¹³² PRO: JUST 1/701, m. 3; Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre Roll of 1261', vol. ii, no. 40

¹³³ PRO: JUST 1/701, m. 9; Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre Roll of 1261', vol. ii, no. 194

¹³⁴ Jobson, 'Oxfordshire Eyre Roll of 1261', vol. i, pp. 165-71.

¹³⁵ *CPR 1216-1225*, p. 395.

¹³⁶ Lapsley, 'Buzones', pp. 177-193.

¹³⁷ *CFR 1227-1228*, 12/149; *CRR*, x, pp. 267, 344-346.

6.3.6 Religious Houses

The possible significance of the chapel of St Nicholas has been noted, but knightly tenants of the honour had extensive links with other religious houses in their localities, and through them, with other networks of lay people associated with those houses; they were, therefore, as much a part of the social milieu of individual knightly tenants as were fellow knights, peasant tenants or magnates. The Chenduit family had a strong association with the house of Austin Canons at Missenden, which had been founded in 1133.¹³⁸ In his account of Ralph Chenduit's dispute with St Alban's, Paris states the important role taken in the incident by the abbot of Missenden, Ralph's 'special friend' and executor of his will. The abbot, Paris states, on hearing that Ralph had been taken seriously ill, rode to him with utmost haste, only reaching him breathless on a very fast horse, just before he died, repentant for the wrongs he had done to St Alban's.¹³⁹ Ralph's relationship with the abbot was in the context of a family tradition extending back several generations. Missenden was located four miles west of the Chenduits' property at Chesham, and eleven miles west of their principal manor at Langley. The Chenduits were associated with the abbey as early as 1179 when a final concord was made at Westminster on the Monday before the feast of St Edmund between William Chenduit and the canons of Missenden in which they granted him 130 acres of land in return for an

¹³⁸ *VCH Buckingham*, i, pp. 369-76.

¹³⁹ *Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, ed. Vaughan, p. 76. The abbot at this time would have been Roger of Gilsburgh, the previous abbot, Martin, having been removed from office by Bishop Robert Grosseteste of Lincoln for his conduct. *VCH Buckingham*, i, pp. 369-76.

annual rent of 10s from his mill at Langley (Hertfordshire).¹⁴⁰ This relationship continued into the thirteenth century, Ralph (II) making a grant of rents to the abbey in c.1221, and witnessing nearly twenty charters in connection with the abbey, for the most part appearing first on the witness lists. Ralph (III)'s friendship with Abbot Roger therefore shows that he was part of the same religious network of benefactors and neighbours of Missenden that his ancestors had been, and demonstrates that relationships with religious institutions in the area were important.

The fitzEllis family had links to Newburgh Priory in Yorkshire, from where they originated. William (I) became a canon there and his brother, Bernard was prior in 1189.¹⁴¹ William's son, Henry became a canon at Oseney, the abbey founded in 1139 by the d'Oilly family, who after William (I)'s marriage to Emma, became their feudal lords.¹⁴² Members of the family also had connections with other religious houses. William (II) granted urban property to the hospital of St John the Baptist in Oxford in a charter datable to 1220x1225.¹⁴³ As with the Rycotes, this link was closely bound up with the urban property interests of the fitzEllis family. When Margery the wife of William (III) fitzEllis died sometime between 1232 and 1250, William granted the Augustinian canons at Bradenstoke in Wiltshire for her soul, an acre of land 'to augment the lights burning ... during the daily Mass of the Virgin'.¹⁴⁴ He later granted the canons a road and drove way through Corton for 4 marks and 1d a year thereafter, 'in order that the canons may have this drove-way for horses, wagons, carts, and any kind of beast.'¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ *Missenden*, iii, no. 874.

¹⁴¹ *Oseney*, iv, p. 375. Salter suggested that William (I) fitzEllis may have been the chronicler, William of Newburgh, who is known to have spent some time in the vicinity of Thame in Oxfordshire.

¹⁴² *Oseney*, iv, p. 388.

¹⁴³ *St John the Baptist*, i, p. 231.

¹⁴⁴ *Bradenstoke*, p. 47.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 47-8.

Bradenstoke, which was founded by the earl of Salisbury in 1139, was close to the fitzEllises' Wiltshire manor of Corton. Nothing is known about Margery and so it is possible that her family had connections with the priory, perhaps as tenants of the earldom of Salisbury. The fact that William (III)'s grant was for the daily Mass of the Virgin is interesting in the context of the rededication of the parish church at Waterperry to St Mary the Virgin in 1273 which may have been in William's lifetime.¹⁴⁶ This might therefore provide some evidence of a particular devotion to Mary which was increasingly common in this period.

Associations with religious houses overlapped and strengthened other important social ties of neighbourhood, lordship and kinship. They could be the focus of pious devotion and were part of the intricate web of social connections of which all the knightly tenants of the honour of Wallingford were a part.

6.3.7 Broader Horizons

In addition to the locality and region in which they lived, knightly tenants of the honour maintained a much wider frame of reference. They may not have been involved with these circles on as regular a basis as the much more geographically limited ones, but the wider world beyond the locality does deserve attention.

For many of the knights, contact with the king's court would have given them a 'national' outlook. Ralph (III) Chenduit was struck down by his illness while riding home from London according to Matthew Paris, whom it will be remembered, relates

¹⁴⁶ See above, p. 252.

how Ralph was overheard in the royal palace at Westminster laughing derisively at his many excommunications by the monks of St Alban's.¹⁴⁷ Paris appears to take for granted the fact that Ralph would frequent the royal palace, and his story, if it were true, would suggest that Ralph felt comfortable there.

Ralph Chenduit also had social contacts over a very wide geographical area. Matilda, Ralph's second wife, had been in possession of the manors of Averham in Nottinghamshire near Newark, and of Eling in Hampshire near Southampton, which had been the property of Matthew Husee, who was probably her father or brother.¹⁴⁸ In 1240/1 she had given Eling to John of Gatesden to hold of her and her heirs for half a knight's fee.¹⁴⁹ Ralph acted alongside John of Gatesden as a pledge for Thomas of Warblington in 1243 for the debt of 100s he owed to the countess of Eu.¹⁵⁰ Thomas held lands in Hampshire and Cambridgeshire in chief of the king, for which he had paid a relief of £10 in August 1226.¹⁵¹ He is not known to have held any land near the main Chenduit estates of the southern midlands. It may be that Ralph Chenduit's involvement with Thomas of Warblington and John of Gatesden, which seems to represent an involvement with the affairs of Hampshire and Sussex, was the result of his marriage to Matilda. On the other hand, his marriage to Matilda may have been part of his involvement with this area. Through marriage, lordship and administrative service, Ralph Chenduit had connections in Westminster at the royal court and with individuals of a similar social position from across the south-east of England.

¹⁴⁷ See above, p. 257.

¹⁴⁸ *VCH Hampshire*, iv, p. 546.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *CRR*, xviii, no. 72.

¹⁵¹ *CFR 1224-1234*, pp. 95-6.

Fulk (II) of Rycote was another figure who through royal service and connections with the earls of Cornwall seems to have associated with those at the centre of national power as well as the extensive local contacts he had in his locality. In 1271 he witnessed a charter of John, prior of St Saviour, Bermondsey in favour of Adam of Stratton.¹⁵² His fellow witnesses included John Chishull, the royal treasurer, and Roger de la Leye, the chancellor of the exchequer. This charter is interesting in that it relates to a priory very distant from what appears to have been Fulk's home region of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. It shows Fulk (II) in the company of important officials of the central government, witnessing a charter of a priory near London. This reveals that Fulk (II) had important connections much further afield than most other sources suggest. Having been a sheriff, he would no doubt have had to travel to Westminster, and this charter was issued at the same time that Fulk witnessed a Sandford Priory charter as steward of the earl of Cornwall (1270x1272).¹⁵³ His service to both the king and the earl of Cornwall brought him into contact with a much broader range of people over a much wider area.

One of the knightly families that held of the honour in this period apparently maintained links outside England. The settlement of a new French military aristocracy in the wake of the Norman invasion of 1066 was discussed in an earlier chapter, but it is significant that in at least one case, kinship links lasted well beyond the first generation after the Conquest. David Crouch has argued that while a sense of unity and common interest between Normans and English endured at the magnate level up until King John's loss of Normandy in 1204, at the knightly level, much more local concerns became significant within a few generations of the Conquest except in the very few instances

¹⁵² *CR 1268-1272*, pp. 409-410.

¹⁵³ *Sandford*, no. 27.

where families at this level retained cross-channel holdings.¹⁵⁴ The Druval family originated in Normandy and appear to have been associated with the family of Miles Crispin who probably gave the ancestor of the later Druval family land in the honour of Wallingford in the early twelfth century. But the family's connection with Normandy persisted for more than a century. In an undated charter, Thomas de Druval's brother, Hugh, confirmed grants Thomas made to the abbey of Bec in Normandy.¹⁵⁵ Thomas's grant was made some time before 1176 as it was confirmed by a bull of Pope Alexander III who died in that year.¹⁵⁶ This continuing connection with the abbey of Bec, the abbey with which the Crispin family had been closely associated and which therefore had been closely linked to the honour of Wallingford after the conquest, demonstrates the persistent importance of such ties long after the lords of the honour had ceased to be connected. As well as confirming his brother's gifts, Hugh's charter also granted the abbey gifts of his own. He granted the monks the mills of Goring and a virgate of land, and crucially, the church of Druval, lands and rents in Normandy and a vavassour in Druval.¹⁵⁷ This is remarkable evidence of cross channel land holding by a minor knightly family at the end of the twelfth century who made gifts to a Norman abbey with lands in England, and whose gifts consisted of a mixture of mills in southern Oxfordshire and a church in lower Normandy. It seems unlikely therefore that the Druval family land on either side of the English Channel was split between the two brothers. Hugh at least had interests on both sides of the channel. The fact that Hugh's holdings in Goring and Druval seem to be so intertwined helps to account for the continued unity of the cross-

¹⁵⁴ Crouch, 'Normans and Anglo-Normans', pp. 51-67.

¹⁵⁵ *Select Documents*, no. 24.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 51.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

channel possessions over a century after the conquest. This may have been an exceptional case, but it provides an important example of how even at this level, there were factors that could link members of a local elite with much broader society than the purely local.

6.3.8 Conclusion: An honorial community?

The honorial community was not insular and was often not the main focus of solidarity for tenants of the honour. Yet there is enough evidence to show that a sense of common identity did exist within the honour and that it continued to be of great significance at the end of the thirteenth century. A few sources demonstrate continued knowledge of and interest in the honour's past and its institutions, while the extensive legal jurisdiction of the honour and the employment of tenants in its administration appear to have confirmed the honour's role in tenants' lives. The fact that many tenants of the honour had their lands in the same geographical area and were therefore neighbours no doubt further strengthened honorial ties. For some at least, the community of the honour of Wallingford was a reality in 1300.

6.4 THE HONOUR AND POLITICS

The foregoing chapter has explored the social *milieu* of tenants of the honour, and the evidence for an honorial identity among the tenants, while the previous chapter examined the development of the tenants' social status and involvement in local government. Attention will now be turned to the part played by tenants of the honour in the tumultuous politics of the period.

6.4.1 The honour and King John

The honour of Wallingford is known among historians principally for its mention by name in both Henry II's Assize of Clarendon, and in Magna Carta, issued by King John at Runnymede on 15 June 1215. Cap. 43 of the charter states:

Si quis tenuerit de aliqua eskaeta, sicut de honore Wallingfordie, Notingham, Bolonie, Lancastrie, vel de aliis eskaetis que sunt in manu nostra et sunt baronie, et obierit, heres ejus non det aliud relevium, nec faciat nobis aliud servicium quam faceret baroni si baronia illa esset in manu baronis; et nos eodem modo eam tenebimus quo baro eam tenuit.

[If anyone holds of any escheat, such as of the honour of Wallingford, Nottingham, Bolougne, Lancaster, or any other escheat which is in our hand and are baronies, and dies, his heir shall not give any relief, nor do any service to us other than what he would have done to the baron if that barony had been in the hands of the baron; and we shall hold it in the same manner as the baron held it.]¹⁵⁸

This is a remarkable mention of the honour, and its inclusion suggests it and its tenants played a significant part in the politics of the period. Wallingford was indeed an escheated honour as it had been since the accession of Henry II in 1154. This meant that the tenants of the honour were from 1154 until 1231 direct tenants of the king, except for a brief period from the start of the reign of Richard I in 1189 until 1194 when the honour

¹⁵⁸ Holt, *Magna Carta*, p. 462. Translation is based on Holt's.

was given by Richard I to his brother, John, count of Poitou. The honour was treated as a distinct unit of lordship throughout this period and its tenants, holding *ut de honore*, were treated differently from tenants holding *ut de corona*.¹⁵⁹ The honour of Wallingford retained its integrity and identity throughout this period. Whereas tenants-in-chief who held as of the crown owed suit at the *curia regis*, tenants of the honour of Wallingford and those of other escheated honours continued to owe suit at the court of their honour and were allowed, by Henry II, the privilege of only owing the same feudal dues as they had done before coming into the hands of the king.¹⁶⁰ Whereas tenants-in-chief of the crown had to pay reliefs on an arbitrary basis, it was generally accepted in the reign of Henry II that tenants of escheated honours should pay only 100s per knight's fee, as they would have paid their lord before the honour escheated.¹⁶¹ The inclusion of cap. 43 in the great charter might well imply therefore that King John had not been holding to these conventions. The fact that Wallingford was named first in a list of only four honours suggests that specific grievances of Wallingford tenants may have been taken into account in the drafting of the charter at Runnymede. The charter also contained a number of other provisions that will be shown to have been of direct benefit to the tenants of the honour of Wallingford. Many of its chapters were concerned with regulating the relationship between the king and his tenants-in-chief. While Wallingford tenants were not legally tenants-in-chief, the parts of the charter relating to scutage and military service, castle-guard, wardships and marriages, would have been relevant to them.

¹⁵⁹ Madox, *Baronia Anglica*, pp. 168-69; McKechnie, *Magna Carta*, pp. 478-81.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ *Dialogus de Scaccario*, p. 144.

Furthermore, Kathryn Faulkner has identified nine clauses which dealt with matters of particular significance to knights.¹⁶²

There is evidence that tenants of the honour of Wallingford were involved in the rebellion. William (II) fitzEllis, lord of Waterperry appears to have been present at Runnymede in June, in the weeks following the issue of the charter. Letters close dated 23 June ordered the sheriff of Buckinghamshire to give William seisin of the manor of Oakley which, the letters state, he had been disseised ‘by will and without judgement’ by the king, in words that directly echoed cap. 52 of Magna Carta that stated that, ‘if anyone has been disseised or deprived by us without lawful judgement of his peers of lands, castles, liberties or his rights we will restore them him at once.’¹⁶³ Ralph Chenduit was also present at Runnymede and on 22 June gained letters close returning to him rents in Netley that he had similarly been disseised of by the king. Both of these knights were therefore probably involved in the rebellion, and some of the provisions of the charter may have owed their inclusion to the involvement of such men in the rebellion.¹⁶⁴

William fitzEllis’s grant of Oakley was the culmination of a long dispute between him and the Basset family of Ipsden which had causes going back to the reign of Stephen. William’s claim to Oakley was through his mother, Emma of Waterperry, the daughter and heiress of Fulk de Brai. Fulk himself was the son of Luvel de Brai who had held the manors of Waterperry, Oakley and Corton in the early twelfth century. In 1086, both Waterperry and Oakley had been held of Robert d’Oilly.¹⁶⁵ Oakley was held of Robert by a tenant named Robert fitz Walter, while Waterperry was held by a tenant named

¹⁶² Faulkner ‘The Knights in the Magna Carta Civil War’, pp. 8-10.

¹⁶³ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, p. 216; Holt, *Magna Carta*, p. 465.

¹⁶⁴ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, p. 216; Holt, *Magna Carta*, p. 165.

¹⁶⁵ GDB, fols. 149; 158v.

Robert. It is highly likely that these were the same man and that both manors were initially held by the same tenant of the same lord. By the reign of Henry I, the two manors were held of different lords (Waterperry was held of the d'Oilly family and Oakley was held of Brian fitzCount as of the honour of Wallingford), by Luvel de Brai. Luvel predeceased his wife Basilia who in 1163 was given in marriage to Osmund Basset, a kinsman of the prominent Basset family of Wallingford tenants. Luvel de Brai and Basilia had already had a son, Fulk de Brai who apparently inherited Waterperry. Fulk died leaving only his daughter Emma, whom William (I) fitzEllis married and through whom he, and then their son, William (II) pursued a claim to the manor of Oakley throughout the later twelfth century. They appear to have gained seisin of it as a result of this legal action in 1194, but in 1208 King John revoked the decision of the courts and confirmed Oakley to the Basset family. By joining the rebels in 1215 William (II) fitzEllis appears to have secured his family's claim and the return of Oakley. William Basset persuaded the minority government to order an inquest into the matter in December 1217,¹⁶⁶ but this evidently decided in William fitzEllis's favour as when he died in 1227, his son William (III) paid a relief of 100s to inherit the manor.¹⁶⁷ William (II)'s presence at Runnymede in 1215 was therefore closely associated with a particular grievance against the king. Ralph Chenduit also appears to have had a similar personal claim against the king though of a smaller nature.

Although they were to become so, neither Ralph nor William were tenants of the honour of Wallingford at this time. Of course William fitzEllis had been, and was claiming to be a tenant of the honour. What evidence is there for the attitude of the rest

¹⁶⁶ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, p. 346.

¹⁶⁷ *CFR 1226-1227*, 11/283-4.

of the tenants of the honour to the rebellion? A number of tenants of the honour are known to have been involved. In addition to those mentioned, William de Valognes who held Shabbington in Oxfordshire of the honour had apparently had his lands confiscated by 16 March 1216 suggesting he was a rebel.¹⁶⁸ The names of a large number of rebels are available to us in the close roll for 1217 which record those former rebels who had their lands returned to them after joining Henry III's side. Among these names are a sizable number of people who are either specifically stated to have held land within the honour of Wallingford, or who are known from other evidence to have been Wallingford tenants. In all there are twelve Wallingford tenants among the *reversi* of 1217; namely, William de Neville, Thomas Huscarl, Geoffrey Peverel, Geoffrey de Chausy, Fulk of Rycote, Ralph of Wedon, William Basset, Hervey Malet, William de Upton, Richard Morin, William Neirnit, and Maurice Angevin.¹⁶⁹ Considering these knights were all holding of one honour, this is a large number of rebels and this goes some way towards explaining the prominence of the honour of Wallingford in Magna Carta. It is striking that William Basset of Ipsden was among the rebels as well as William fitzEllis, as both knights were on either side of the dispute over Oakley thus demonstrating that there was more at stake than private land disputes.

We cannot be certain whether this represents a full record of the rebels of the honour. The 1217 pipe roll recorded that the sheriff of Berkshire accounted for £77 12s 10d worth of lands of enemies of the king in the honour of Wallingford again providing evidence of a large rebellion among tenants of the honour.¹⁷⁰ Yet this figure also suggests that it was not the entire honour that rebelled in 1215 and that some knights

¹⁶⁸ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, p. 253b.

¹⁶⁹ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, pp. 300, 305, 315, 321, 324, 325, 326, 330, 332, 334, 338, 340.

¹⁷⁰ *Pipe Roll 17 John*, pp. 44-5.

stayed loyal to King John. Indeed, it is clear that Walter Foliot remained on the king's side as on 15 December 1215 he received land taken from a rebel and on 29 March 1216, King John issued letters close addressed directly to him.¹⁷¹ In the summer of 1215, the king sent letters to ten knights of the honour ordering them to guard Wallingford castle.¹⁷² Among those who received letters, however, were Thomas Huscarl, Geoffrey de Chausy, Fulk of Rycote, William Basset, and Richard Morin, all of whom were among the *reversi* in 1217. The remaining six may have remained loyal to the king, though this is by no means certain.¹⁷³ For other tenants, it is difficult to tell what part they played during the time of civil war. Nevertheless, the fact that at least thirteen knightly tenants of the honour were involved in the rebellion helps to explain the specific mention of Wallingford in the charter, and implies that the knights of the honour had suffered considerably under King John. In order to examine what the reasons for such support for rebellion among Wallingford tenants, we must examine the relationship between King John and the honour in the period before 1215.

Cap. 43 specifically addressed two possible areas of contention between tenants of the honour of Wallingford and the king. How much did the first of these, the payment of reliefs affect tenants of the honour? The charter required that they pay only 100s per knight's fee, as had been implied was the custom under Henry II. An examination of the fine rolls of John's reign reveals some evidence that the king was demanding higher relief payments than this, more akin to the negotiated sums paid by tenants-in-chief. When

¹⁷¹ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, pp. 242, 244.

¹⁷² See above, p. 260.

¹⁷³ The other six knights summoned in 1215 were Richard de Camville, Thurstan Basset, Robert fitzAmaury, Henry de Taydon, Robert de Valognes, Hugh de la Mare, Robert of Harpenden, William Darches, Hugh de Druval, Walter Foliot, Amaury son of Robert, Roger de Stanford, Geoffrey of Appleton, and Geoffrey son of Angot.

Geoffrey de Bella Aqua (Bellewe), who held lands of the honour of Wallingford in Buckinghamshire around Hitcham and Marlow, died at the very end of the twelfth century, he had no son but two daughters who were both married. By custom Geoffrey's estate was divided equally between the two heiresses. In 1204, Miles Neirnut, the son of Matilda de Bella Aqua, one of the heiresses, and Thomas son of Richard, husband of Alice de Bella Aqua, the other heiress, each paid a relief of £50 to enter into Geoffrey's inheritance.¹⁷⁴ This appears to have been more similar to what the charter provides for a baronial relief of £100 for a barony. What is known of the family's lands suggests that they were of knightly rank suggesting they would have paid 100s per knight's fee were the charter in force. On the other hand, when in 1214, Maurice Angevin inherited his Wallingford lands at Holecombe, he paid a 'reasonable' relief of 100s. John was not, therefore, routinely charging excessive reliefs to tenants of the honour. Despite only being made to pay the relief due from a knight, Maurice Angevin was among the rebels in 1217.

Another issue that cap. 43 of the charter on escheats mentions is that of service suggesting that this too may have been a grievance for Wallingford tenants. Other chapters of the charter also related to royal exactions and would have been of concern to tenants of the honour of Wallingford, but their direct association with the king made the issue especially acute in their case. As J.C. Holt states, 'John's demands for military service had borne more heavily on tenants of escheat than on any other class of men.'¹⁷⁵ The problem, Holt goes on to say, was that while tenants-in-chief had been allowed reductions in service quotas, the king had not allowed this to tenants of escheats. The

¹⁷⁴ *Rotuli de Oblatis*, pp. 224, 232.

¹⁷⁵ Holt, *Magna Carta*, p. 316.

evidence suggests that tenants of the honour of Wallingford were greatly burdened by military service and scutage under John. As far as scutage is concerned, the combined sum that could be gained from the honour is illustrated by the scutage of Galway taken in the thirty-third year of Henry II's reign which raised £100 15s from the honour of Wallingford, and the scutage taken by Richard I in 1194 which raised £100 5s.¹⁷⁶ Scutages were taken at ever more regular intervals in John's reign. Royal possession of the honour meant that the exchequer had detailed knowledge of its tenants, how much land they held, and their debts to the king. Furthermore, scutage was collected from the tenants by the steward of the honour who was a royal official who accounted at the exchequer.

In addition to scutage, tenants-in-chief were increasingly being made to pay fines *ne transfretet* ('that he should not cross the sea'). Such fines were an innovation of the 1190s and their introduction was part of an attempted re-organisation of military service so as to provide money to hire knights to serve for longer periods, necessary for continental campaigns.¹⁷⁷ Maddicott points out that John's exploitation of fines, like scutages, bore down most heavily on lesser landowners; fines, he states, were felt not so much by knightly tenants of lords, but by the lesser tenants-in-chief, whose common interests with knightly tenants he attributes to the development of the practice of summoning shire representatives to parliament in the early thirteenth century.¹⁷⁸ While the honour of Wallingford was in royal hands, its tenants were treated as tenants-in-chief in this as in other areas. Wallingford knights were recorded paying these fines in great

¹⁷⁶ *Pipe Roll 33 Henry II*, p. 22; *Pipe Roll 6 Richard I*, p. 17.

¹⁷⁷ Maddicott, *Origins of Parliament*, p. 128.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

numbers. In 1201, eleven knights of the honour paid fines *ne transfretet*.¹⁷⁹ They continued to be required to pay such fines in the reign of Henry III; the fines they paid not to cross the sea for the king's Poitou expedition of 1228 seem to have been collected together by the keeper of the honour, as they were entered together on the fine roll of that year.¹⁸⁰ Thus in yet another instance, the knights of the honour suffered from the pressures of royal government more than many of their knightly peers.

There is also much evidence to suggest that tenants of the honour performed service in person. Wallingford knights were prominent among the army King John took to Ireland in 1210. The *prestita* roll reveals that at least twenty Wallingford knights served on that expedition including Ralph Dayrell, Walter Foliot, Richard Morin, Geoffrey of Appleton, William Darches, Robert fitzAmaury, John de Stamford, Alan de Valognes, Ralph Danvers, Robert de Mara, Henry of Wheatfield, Thomas Basset, Alan Basset, Warin fitzGerold, John Huscarl, Geoffrey de Chausy, Hervey Malet, Hugh de Druval, Reginald Angevin, Miles Neirnit, and Amaury fitzRobert.¹⁸¹ Some of these were barons and household knights holding of the honour, who had wider interests or greater wealth than the local knights, but it is clear that there was a substantial component of those who were essentially Wallingford tenants. Walter Foliot, Richard Morin, Thomas Huscarl, and Amaury fitzRobert also served in the army King John took through Yorkshire and Durham in 1212 after the conspiracy of Robert fitz Walter and Eustace de Vescy.¹⁸² The direct relationship between the tenants of the honour and the king

¹⁷⁹ *Rotuli de Oblatis*, pp. 144, 148-150.

¹⁸⁰ *CFR 1228-1229*, 13/221-2, 332.

¹⁸¹ *Rotuli de Liberate*, pp. 177, 178, 179, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 190, 192, 198.

¹⁸² *Pipe Roll 17 John*, p. 90.

apparently put them under great pressure to serve in royal armies and it ensured that they were militarised, all contributing to the rebellion of Wallingford knights.

Adding to this burden of service, it is likely that many, if not all of the tenants of the honour were required to perform castle-guard at Wallingford castle. The summonses of 1215 have been mentioned. It is interesting in this light that cap. 29 of Magna Carta dealt with castle guard and required that no one should be compelled to give money for this if he were willing to do it in person, and that those serving in the king's army should be excused castle-guard. These too were possible points of contention for tenants of the honour of Wallingford.

The matter of wardships and marriages was another aspect of the relationship between the tenants and King John that could have been a contributory factor in the rebellion of some of them. Clauses 4 and 5 of the charter regulated the conduct of guardians of heirs who inherited under age. Heirs to fees of the honour of Wallingford appear to have been granted to leading courtiers in John's reign. The king granted Alan Basset of High Wycombe, who was a tenant of the honour of Wallingford but also a much greater figure with close links to the royal court, the wardship of Hugh, heir to the Druval family lands, in 1202.¹⁸³ In 1205, the bishop of London owed scutage for the land of the Wallingford tenant, Robert fitzAmaury of Chesterton, apparently having been granted the wardship by John.¹⁸⁴ Not enough is known of these periods of guardianship to say whether or not the knightly families suffered from this policy of exploiting the rights to wardship, but it is clear that the honour's lands were used by John in this way, again providing ground for sympathising with the rebels.

¹⁸³ *Rotuli de Liberate*, pp. 27.

¹⁸⁴ *Rotuli de Oblatis*, p. 309.

In the rebellion against King John in 1215-1217, therefore, there is evidence that knightly tenants of the honour of Wallingford were politicised. In the case of William fitzEllis, we can see that he was present at Runnymede days after the charter's issue, and in a number of other cases, we know that tenants of the honour ended their rebellion in 1217. There is thus clear evidence of the involvement of tenants in important national political events of this period. An analysis of Magna Carta and the period of John's lordship of the honour of Wallingford show a number of potential areas of grievance and may even point to some involvement of the knights in the formulation of the barons' demands at Runnymede. The specific and prominent mention of the honour of Wallingford in clause 43 more than anything else appears to confirm that the political voice of at least some of the knightly tenants of the honour had been heard.

6.4.2 Tenants of the honour and politics, 1217-1258

The period following the accession of Henry III was marked by power struggles within the minority government, the most important being the rivalry between Peter des Roches and Hubert de Burgh.¹⁸⁵ During this time, two of the honour's tenants at least appear to have pursued an independent political strategy, as we have seen. In the late 1220s and early 1230s, Ralph Chenduit seems to have joined the retinue of William Marshal during a period in which Richard of Cornwall became established as lord of the honour of Wallingford in the context of the return to England of Peter des Roches and the fall from government of Hubert de Burgh.¹⁸⁶ William (II) fitzEllis, after his involvement in the 1215-1217 civil war, evidently continued his political activity in the 1220s. In 1222, he

¹⁸⁵ Coss, 'Law and Political Culture', pp. 261-278, at p. 272.

¹⁸⁶ See above, p. 293.

was among four knights who gave a controversial judgement at the Oxfordshire county court, causing all the knights of the county to rise up from the court because they did not wish to be involved in the judgement.¹⁸⁷ At this time, the notorious Falkes de Breaute was sheriff of the county, and it may be that William's controversial judgement was associated with Falkes's political influence.¹⁸⁸ Three years later, William fitzEllis along with Vitalis Engaine and Ralph de Bray, was accused of treason by an approver named Richard fitzNigel and was imprisoned at the Tower of London.¹⁸⁹ The reason this accusation was taken seriously, Peter Coss has argued, was because such a plot by these men was in some way believable, and suggests that Ralph de Bray's involvement with Falkes de Breaute who by this time had abjured the realm, gave the claim some authenticity even though the accusation was eventually rejected and Richard fitz Nigel executed. William fitzEllis's possible involvement with Falkes may have led him to be named among the plotters.¹⁹⁰ Both William fitzEllis and Ralph Chenduit were substantial knights, politically active in the 1220s and 1230s. William, with his involvement in local government, especially, was perhaps the kind of figure described in *Bracton* as the *buzones* of the county.¹⁹¹ His landed interests were local but he was also closely involved with central politics.

¹⁸⁷ *CRR*, x, pp. 267. 344-346.

¹⁸⁸ Coss, 'Law and Political Culture', pp. 270-1.

¹⁸⁹ *CRR*, xii, no. 1055; Coss, 'Law and Political Culture', pp. 262-5.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 270-1.

¹⁹¹ Lapsley, 'Buzones', pp. 177-193; Coss, 'Knighthood and the Early Thirteenth Century County Court', pp. 45-57; Coss, *Origins*, p. 58. See chapter 5.4 for tenants' involvement in local government.

6.4.3 The period of reform and rebellion, 1258-1265

Tenants of the honour of Wallingford were very active during the Magna Carta rebellion against John in 1215-1217, and there is evidence that some continued to be attuned to politics at a national level in the period after. The years of reform from 1258 to 1265 have been seen by historians as central to understanding the emergence of the lesser nobility as a political force. How active were tenants of the honour of Wallingford in this period, and what political stance did they take? Evidence relating to this question is less plentiful than is the case for the 1215-1217 civil war in that we have a much less clear idea of the proportions of Wallingford tenants who rebelled and who remained loyal to the king, or of if and when they changed from one side to another. Adrian Jobson has analysed the political behaviour of Richard of Cornwall's tenants in an important article of 2009 and argued that among them there was a substantial number of rebels.¹⁹² He has shown that in Oxfordshire, the proportion of Richard's tenants of the honours of Wallingford and St Valery who were involved with the rebels was higher than that of other lords in Oxfordshire.¹⁹³ Taking the list of protections of individuals Richard took to Germany for his coronation in 1257 as a guide to his retinue, Jobson demonstrates that Richard's affinity was divided in the reform period.

Scattered references to Montfortians among the tenants of the honour of Wallingford do survive. Stephen Chenduit is one example of a Wallingford tenant who supported the Montfortians. His case is especially interesting as he had a close association with Earl Richard, having travelled in his retinue to Germany in 1257 for the

¹⁹² Jobson, 'Richard of Cornwall and the Baronial Opposition', pp. 61-74.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

earl's coronation as king of the Romans.¹⁹⁴ As we saw above, Simon de Montfort's government cancelled all Stephen's debts in December 1264 strongly suggesting that Montfort had reason to believe he was a supporter.¹⁹⁵ Later the king granted Walter de Beauchamp all of the lands and tenements of Stephen Chenduit, who was described as *inimicus regis* in 1265.¹⁹⁶ Furthermore, a man called Roger de Mikelfeld, had land in Warfield in Berkshire seized by Giles of Wodeham because he had been against the king. Roger was also recorded as being in the service of Stephen Chenduit.¹⁹⁷ Much of this evidence points to Stephen being a Montfortian supporter despite his closeness to Earl Richard. On 25 November 1265, Stephen was among a number of men who claimed that he had not been against the king and offered himself up at the king's court for judgement on the matter. The royal government was evidently satisfied as to his loyalty as on 24 December, he was appointed 'to repress the insolence of malefactors of the counties of Middlesex, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire, who disturb the peace with horses and arms, commit depredations and homicides by day and by night; with mandate to knights and others of those counties to be of aid and counsel to him with all their power.'¹⁹⁸ This was a responsible and powerful position and not one that would have been given to someone who was suspected of Montfortian sympathies.

Like his predecessor, Ralph Chenduit in the 1230s, Stephen appears to have been pursuing an independent line of action during the Montfortian period. While his lord, Earl Richard was a consistent supporter of the king, Stephen flirted with the opposition at least temporarily. In this action, though, he may have been following the political

¹⁹⁴ *CPR 1247-1258*, p. 589.

¹⁹⁵ *CFR 1264-1265*, no. 54.

¹⁹⁶ *CR (Supplementary) 1244-1266*, no. 417.

¹⁹⁷ *CIM*, no. 626.

¹⁹⁸ *CPR 1258-1266*, p. 652.

manoeuvrings of Earl Richard's son, Henry of Almain. Indeed, there is a possibility that Stephen was attached to Henry in some sort of sub-retinue. Both Stephen and Henry travelled to Germany in 1257 for Richard's coronation and Matthew Paris noted that Stephen returned to England at the same time as Henry of Almain, which may suggest that Stephen was part of Henry's following. Stephen's age at this time is uncertain, but it is likely he was fairly close in age to the twenty-one-year-old Henry, considering he was the grandson of Ralph (III) who died young (as Paris tells us), in 1243. If Stephen Chenduit was in Henry of Almain's retinue from 1257 onwards, this may provide some explanation as to his actions in the period of reform and rebellion. Despite starting out in 1258 by refusing to agree to reform without his father's consent, Henry of Almain became a supporter of Simon de Montfort like other young noblemen, including his cousin, the Lord Edward and the circle of violent young marcher lords with whom they both associated. Henry of Almain joined the earl of Leicester when the latter returned to England in 1263 and began his armed opposition to the king. Shortly after the rebellion had begun, Henry of Almain probably had his acrimonious split with Earl Simon shortly afterwards when he informed him that he could no longer fight with him. Thus, if Stephen Chenduit were in Henry of Almain's service, it is possible to see how someone with such close connections to the earl of Cornwall could have become a Montfortian, though Henry had deserted Montfort by the time Stephen's debts were cancelled in 1264, suggesting that if there had been a connection, they parted company.

Among other tenants of the honour, we have little information, but a few details suggest clear royalist sympathies among several. Fulk of Rycote was most demonstrably a royalist as he was removed from the office of sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire in

June 1264, and replaced by the Montfortian supporter John de St Valery, who was also a tenant of Earl Richard, holding of the honour of St Valery.¹⁹⁹ The conduct of William (III) fitzEllis during this period is not known, but he seems to have been close to the royalist side. On 18 March 1264 he was sent letters close summoning him to Oxford with horses and arms to join the royalist army being raised by the king, Richard of Cornwall and the Lord Edward, suggesting at least that the king had reason to believe he was loyal.²⁰⁰ The following August, after the battle of Evesham, he received letters of simple protection, but this does not necessarily mean that he was a rebel.²⁰¹ Finally, Ralph Dayrell can be linked to the royalists by association, in the sense that his close associate, Elias of Tingewick was a prominent royalist, and that his sister, Emma married Richard Grusset, another royalist in 1262.²⁰² The evidence is not conclusive.

While, in Holt's words, the rebellion of 1215 had broadly feudal characteristics, in 1258-1265, there seems to have been more complexity.²⁰³ Earl Richard's tenants were not united, as Jobson has shown, and the community of the honour as a whole seems to have taken no common position. In 1215, however, if Magna Carta is anything to go by, at least a portion of the honorial community seem to have had collective grievances about the way they had been treated under John. The case of William fitzEllis shows that private disputes and family rivalries also played an important part in the political decisions taken by knights of the honour in 1215, just as they must have done later in the century.

¹⁹⁹ *CPR 1258-1266*, p. 327.

²⁰⁰ *CR 1261-1264*, p. 380.

²⁰¹ *CPR 1258-1266*, p. 439.

²⁰² A Ralph of Tingewick was appointed rector of Lillingstone by Ralph Dayrell in 1267: *Luffield Charters*, ii, no. 392.

²⁰³ Holt, *Northerners*, p. 36.

6.5 THE ORIGINS OF THE GENTRY

The families that have been examined here formed part of the group in society that lay between the magnates on the one hand, and freemen and peasantry on the other. In the fourteenth century, they came to be represented in parliament in the House of Commons and governed their localities as Justices of the Peace. Coss has advanced compelling reasons to avoid the use of the term ‘gentry’ until the constitutional and social developments of the fourteenth century created a state of affairs that in many ways resembled that which existed in England through to the nineteenth century.²⁰⁴ To use the term ‘gentry’ in respect of the thirteenth century or before, he argues, is to risk reading the conditions of a later time into societies that were very different, where vertical ties of lordship and service were preponderant over those of community and collective identity. The last two chapters have examined the knightly tenants of the honour in the context of their wealth, status and life style, and in their involvement in local government and national politics. Ties of lordship as well as the social circles in which they moved have also been considered. The picture Coss presents of the emergence of the gentry as a distinct class in English society is largely confirmed by the evidence of the tenants examined here. Coss defines the characteristics of the gentry after 1350 as follows: it was a type of lesser nobility; it was based on land but also able to accommodate other types of property and professionals; it was a territorial elite that transcended status derived from service or personal association, or from mere landlordship, among which

²⁰⁴ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 1-19; Coss, *Foundations*, pp. 1-3.

there was clear social gradation; it related to a distant public authority that required the services of a local elite; it sought to exercise collective social control over the populace on a territorial basis; and it had a collective identity with collective interests which necessitated some forum for their articulation.²⁰⁵ The tenants of the honour of Wallingford demonstrate the development of these characteristics.

Firstly, the tenants' landed base was a constant factor across the period. The majority of tenants of the honour of Wallingford were the lords of between one and five manors. Minor landholders were a major element within English society as a whole between 1066 and 1300, as they were before and after. Crucial to the development of the tenants' territorial dominance and consequent political weight is the question of the nature of their tenure. This is why Henry II's legal reforms and the decline of the honour have been considered so important in the rise of the gentry. Recent research has led several historians to stress the security of tenure at this level before the Angevin reforms, arguing that customary laws, royal power and political reality meant that the person who exploited the land may be regarded as its owner.²⁰⁶ For tenants of the honour of Wallingford, the general picture is indeed one of great continuity of tenure, with families holding tenancies through many generations. One aspect of the gentry's territorial domination was thus in place throughout the period.

The importance of identification with their family patrimonies identified by Coss as an element in the territorial dominance of the gentry is apparent in the widespread use of toponymic surnames from the twelfth century. The building work and general display in local chapels and parish churches similarly points to the families' concern from early

²⁰⁵ Coss, *Origins*, p. 11.

²⁰⁶ Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 73-4; Hudson, *Land and Lordship*, pp. 275-281.

on, to identify themselves with their patrimony. Precisely when the families began using heraldry is unclear, but its adoption reflects both pride in lineage and a desire to display it. The kind of evidence available changes substantially across the period making it difficult to trace this, and other cultural changes in detail. Nevertheless, the association between this patrimonial identity and the development of a conscious sense of status seems likely. The families' adoption of some of the trappings of aristocracy and their own dominance over their households, manors and parishes, were closely linked.

In the context of the crucial role that the transformation of knighthood played in the final emergence of the gentry according to Coss's definition, the evidence of tenants of the honour suggests that those families who ceased to take up knighthood during the thirteenth century remained within a loose group of landowners who considered themselves and were considered by others to be noble and gentle, as demonstrated in their use of heraldry explicitly, but also implied by naming patterns and behaviour. Families appear to have moved in and out of knighthood in the course of a career, or over generations as did the Druvals. The slow emergence of 'esquire' as a formal title in English documents in contrast to those of parts of France should not detract from the evidence that families which had given up, or did not assume knighthood, were still members of the lesser nobility.²⁰⁷ Crouch suggests that the divide between knights and non-knights may have been greater in England because of the lack of an honorific rank below knight, but it may equally be suggested that the apparent legal privilege of 'knights' in England was a result of the language of Angevin legal practice which used the term in the old, twelfth century, sense while social reality had moved on. Individuals

²⁰⁷ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 57-58.

opted in and out of knighthood in the knowledge that this had no detrimental effect on their real social status.²⁰⁸

The development of the tenants' role in local government confirms Coss's analysis in the sense that tenants of the honour began receiving commissions from royal government with increasing frequency from the late thirteenth century. Coss sees this development as a decisive step in the creation of a partnership between the crown and county knights in control of the populace. Individuals' standing within the honorial community may have been an element in their selection, but there is an impression that Wallingford tenants, such as Fulk of Rycote, were chosen as a consequence of their own wealth and local standing rather than due to their tenurial connection. That said, it is likely that lordship of the earls of Cornwall was of major significance in bringing such people into local royal government.

The continuing vitality of the honour of Wallingford throughout the thirteenth century in some ways confirms Coss's view that vertical ties of service retained their importance over the horizontal ties of collective identity that were crucial to the emergence of the gentry in the fourteenth century.²⁰⁹ Indeed, for Hugh Thomas, the decline of honours in twelfth-century Yorkshire, and the consequent growth of horizontal ties between local knights, were crucial to what he sees as the emergence of the gentry in that period.²¹⁰ The honour of Wallingford did not decline in the twelfth century, and many of the tenants remained closely connected to the lords of Wallingford.

²⁰⁸ Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis?', p. 738.

²⁰⁹ Coss, *Origins*, pp. 9-12.

²¹⁰ Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses*, pp. 47-58.

On the other hand, tenants have been shown to have enjoyed significant levels of independence, and the dynamic of power in the honour of Wallingford appears to show the significance of a self-governing local community. The economic and social significance that secure tenure of land gave them would have been an ongoing consideration for all those seeking to wield power in England at a higher level, whether king or magnates. Crouch argues that the central importance of honours such as Wallingford was in the opportunities they gave magnates to control local communities, and that there were essential continuities in power structures from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries.²¹¹ He argues that magnates of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries sought to dominate their localities through a variety of means, depending on the circumstances of time and place. Control of a geographical area was the concern for magnates throughout the period, and the honour could in some circumstances be used to do this, as could control of castles, towns and county and hundred courts. The honour of Wallingford was primarily a local community with an identity similar to a county. Although framed around vertical ties of lordship, the honour's value both to its lords and tenants was probably as a horizontal community of local landowners with their own political weight and their own local interests. This is demonstrated in the participation of tenants of the honour in the Magna Carta rebellion of 1217 and in the examples of lords of Wallingford apparently promoting the honour's sense of identity. Tenants of the honour appear to have pursued their interests regardless of tenure, but in practice these interests often overlapped with the honorial community.

²¹¹ Crouch, *English Aristocracy*, pp. 133-159; Crouch, Carpenter, 'Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 165-177; Crouch, 'From Stenton to McFarlane', pp. 179-200.

The continuities in the position of the tenants of the honour across the period were therefore great. The ways that kings and magnates interacted with local society changed substantially over the period, as did pan-European cultural and intellectual trends. The twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw changes in the social, political and cultural ways of understanding and accommodating the same underlying factors; that minor landowners controlled a significant amount of land in England and that this gave them a certain amount of power, and that kings and magnates interacted with local networks in order to build support in the localities. Many of the conditions of later periods were therefore established, and while use of the term ‘gentry’ to describe these minor landowners obscures the important developments of this period, the term used in a loose sense, clearly has some value as a description of the lesser landowners who formed a local elite across the period.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Property belonging to Wigod, his men and his family

Vill	Shire	Name and by-names of TRE landholder	Name of 1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRE value (£)
<u>Demesne estates</u>						
Letcombe Bassett	Berkshire	Wigod	Robert d'Oilly	-	10	15
Goring	Oxfordshire	Wigod	Robert d'Oilly	-	20	10
Shabbington	Buckinghamshire	Wigod of Wallingford	Miles Crispin	-	10	10
Chesterton	Oxfordshire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	William	12	10
Quainton	Buckinghamshire	Wigod of Wallingford	Miles Crispin	-	7.5	8
Alderley	Gloucestershire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	-	1	5
Rodbourne	Wiltshire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	Reginald	5	5
Gatehampton	Oxfordshire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	-	5	4
Cuxham	Oxfordshire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	Alvred	5	3
Manton	Wiltshire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	Reginald	3	3

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Brawn	Gloucestershire	Wigod	Miles Crispin	-	0.75	2
Broadwater	Sussex	Wigod	William de Braose	Robert	29	15
Aldrington	Sussex	Wigod	William de Warenne	Godfrey	9	4
Bepton	Sussex	Wigod	Earl Roger of Montgomery	Geoffrey	4	4
Colham Green	Middlesex	Wigod	Earl Roger of Montgomery	-	8	10
Harlington	Middlesex	Wigod	Earl Roger of Montgomery	Alvred	8	6.4
Total					137.3	114.4
<u>Lands of Toki, Wigod's son, and his men</u>						
Brinkworth	Wiltshire	Toki	Miles Crispin	Humphrey	5	2.5
Ickenham	Middlesex	Toki	Earl Roger of Montgomery	1 Englishman	2	0.0
Iver	Buckinghamshire	Toki	Robert d'Oilly	-	11.25	8.0
Iver	Buckinghamshire	1 sokeman of Toki	Robert d'Oilly	-	0.75	0.5
Total					19.0	11.0
<u>Commended men</u>						
Wavendon	Buckinghamshire	Ordwig	Miles Crispin	Almær	1	0.5
? Langley in Tilehurst	Berkshire	Leofweard	Miles Crispin	Leofweard	1	0.0

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Dawley	Middlesex	Godwine	Earl Roger of Montgomery	Alnoth	3	3.0
Thurleigh	Bedfordshire	Alwine, man of Wulfwig	Robert d'Oilly	Salomon	0.25	0.5
Ickenham	Middlesex	Alwine, man of Wulfsige and Leofric	Earl Roger of Montgomery	1 Englishman	1.75	0.0
Harmondsworth	Middlesex	Alwine	Earl Roger of Montgomery	-	1	0.5
Betterton	Berkshire	Alwine and Leofric	Miles Crispin	-	10	4.0
Whitchurch	Oxfordshire	Alwine	Miles Crispin	-	5	7.5
Whitchurch	Oxfordshire	Leofric	Miles Crispin	-	5	7.5
Harlington	Middlesex	1 sokeman of Wigod	Earl Roger of Montgomery	Alvred	2	1.6
Total					30.0	25.1
Overall Total					167.3	139.5
<u>Possibly Wigod's</u>						
Little Missendon	Buckinghamshire	Alwine, man of Sigeræd 'filius Sybi'	Robert of Mortain	Wigod	1	2.0
Redbourn	Hertfordshire	Alwine 'venator'	bishop of Lisieux	Wigod		0.5
Nares Gladley	Bedfordshire	Wigod 'venator regis'	Jocelyn the Breton	-	2.5	2.0

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Appendix 2. The lands of Beorhtric and his men, in the hands of Miles Crispin and Robert d'Oilly in 1086

Vill	Shire	Name and by-names of <i>TRE</i> landholder	Name of 1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRW value (£)
<u>Demesne estates</u>						
Clapham	Bedfordshire	Beorhtric, thegn of King Edward	Miles Crispin	-	5	24
Waddesdon	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, man of Queen Edith	Miles Crispin	-	27	30
Wingrave	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, man of Queen Edith	Miles Crispin	Nigel	5	5
Stewkley	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, thegn of King Edward	Miles Crispin	Nigel	3.5	4
Wainhill	Oxfordshire	Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Reginald	1	0.5
Somerton	Oxfordshire	Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Reginald	1	1
Marsworth	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, thegn of King Edward	Robert d'Oilly	Ralph Basset	20	20
High Wycombe	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, thegn of Queen Edith	Robert d'Oilly	-	10	26
Total					72.5	110.5

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Commended men

Beachendon	Buckinghamshire	1 man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	2 men	1	0.6
`Shortley	Buckinghamshire	2 thegns of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	2 men	1	0.5
Soulbury	Buckinghamshire	Almær, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Roger	1.375	1
Wingrave	Buckinghamshire	Almær, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Almær	2	2
Aston Sandford	Buckinghamshire	Coleman, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	2 men	0.25	0.5
Littlecote	Buckinghamshire	Herch, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Robert	1	0.75
Wingrave	Buckinghamshire	Leofmær a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Turstin	0.5	0.5
Thurleigh	Bedfordshire	Leofric, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Leofric	0.25	0.5
Pitstone	Buckinghamshire	Leofsige, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Roger	5	1.5
Pitstone	Buckinghamshire	Leofsige, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Swærtin	2	0.5
Horton	Buckinghamshire	Leofsige, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Swarting	1	0.7
Lower and Upper Burston	Buckinghamshire	Oswulf, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	William	0.75	0.75

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North Marston	Buckinghamshire	Særic, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	Særic	1	1
Aston Sandford	Buckinghamshire	Wulfric, a man of Beorhtric	Miles Crispin	2 men	0.25	0.5
Total					17.38	11.29

Appendix 3. Lands of Beorhtric in addition to those held by Miles Crispin and Robert d'Oilly

Vill	Shire	Name and landholder	by-names of TRE	Name of 1086 Tenant-in-Chief	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRW value (£)
Wallingford (1 close)	Berkshire	Beorhtric		-	-	0	0
East Shefford	Berkshire	Beorhtric		Aiulf the sheriff	-	10	10
East and West Ginge	Berkshire	Beorhtric		Cola the thegn	-	3	3
Brimpton	Berkshire	Beorhtric		Robert fitzGerald	-	4.5	4.5
Coleshill	Berkshire	Beorhtric		Turstin fitzRolf	-	8	5
Upton	Berkshire	Beorhtric, a free man		Turstin fitzRolf	-	10	13
Chesham	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, man of Queen Edith		Hugh de Bolbec	-	4.5	0.275

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Little Kimble	Buckinghamshire	Beorhtric, thegn of King Edward	Turstin fitzRolf	Albert	10	5
Temple Guitting	Gloucestershire	Beorhtric, thegn of King Edward	Roger de Lacy	-	10	10
Oakley	Gloucestershire	Beorhtric	Turstin fitzRolf	Gerwy	1	2.5
Rhode	Hampshire	Beorhtric	Herbert chamberlain	the -	1.25	1
Newton Valence	Hampshire	Beorhtric	Turstin fitzRolf	-	10	12
Knighton and Done	Hampshire	Beorhtric	King William	-	0.5	0.625
Wiggington	Hertfordshire	Beorhtric, man of Queen Edith	Robert of Mortain	Humphrey	3.5	1.9
Mitcham	Surrey	Beorhtric	Odo of Bayeux	canons of Bayeux	5	0
Stanford on Teme	Worcestershire	Beorhtric, thegn of Queen Edith	Osbern fitzRichard	-	1.5	1
Total					82.75	69.8

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Appendix 4. Royal Charters relating to Miles Crispin

Style	Position in Charter	Date/Datable	Issuer of Charter	Type of Charter	Beneficiary of Charter	Place of Issue	Reference
Milo Crispinus	Witness (9/11)	1077	King William I	Confirmation of records of grants	Abbey of Notre Dame, Le Bec	-	<i>Regesta</i> , ed. Bates, no. 166.
Milo Crispinus	Earlier grants confirmed and Witness (9/10)	1081x1087	King William I	Confirmation of records of grants	Abbey of Notre Dame, Le Bec	-	<i>Regesta</i> , ed. Bates, no. 167; Salter, <i>EHR</i> (1925)
Milo Crispinus	Witness (16/16)	1081x1086	King William I	Grant of manor of West Walton (Norfolk), held by William de Warenne	Priory of St Pancras, Lewes	-	<i>Regesta</i> , ed. Bates, no. 176.
Milo Crispinus	Witness (2/2)	1088x1089	King William II	Authorizing site of church and confirming gifts	St Mary's Church, York	-	<i>RRAN</i> , I, ed. Davis, no. 313.
Milo Crispinus	Witness (2/3)	1087x1100	King William II	Confirmation of grant	Abbey of St Peter, Westminster	-	<i>RRAN</i> , I, ed. Davis, no. 454.
Milo Crispinus	Witness (3/5)	1087x1100	King William II	Notification to Hugh de Bochland and the sheriff of Middlesex	Staines manor to be in peace.	-	<i>RRAN</i> , I, ed. Davis, no. 455.

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Milo Crispinus	Witness (1/1)	1100 [c. 29 September]	King Henry I	Notification to Robert de Lacy and barons of Yorkshire	Lands of St Alban's in Yorkshire (to be free of customs, castle work, scot)	Salisbury	<i>RRAN</i> , II, ed. Davis, no. 496.
Milo Crispinus	Witness (14/20)	1100 [c. Oct]	King Henry I	Confirmation of gifts	Tewkesbury Abbey	Marlborough	<i>RRAN</i> , II, ed. Davis, no. 497.
Milo Crispinus	Sureties for the King (9/11)	1101, 10 March	King Henry I	Treaty between Henry I and Robert, count of Flanders	-	Dover	<i>RRAN</i> , II, ed. Davis, no. 515.
Milo Crispinus	Earlier grant confirmed	1107, Pentecost	King Henry I	Confirmation of grants	Abbey of St Mary, Abingdon	Westminster	<i>RRAN</i> , II, ed. Davis, no. 813.

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Appendix 5. The demesne and tenanted manors of Miles Crispin

Shire	Vill	TRE landholder	1086 sub-tenant	Hides	Total TRW value (£)
<u>Demesne Estates</u>					
Bedfordshire	Clapham	Beorhtric	-	5	24
Bedfordshire	Milton Ernest	2 sokemen	-	0.133	0
Bedfordshire	Oakley (as subtenant of Countess Judith)	Godwine	-	1	0.5
Berkshire	Clapcot in Wallingford	Wulfnoth the free man	-	7	5
Buckinghamshire	Quainton	Wigod	-	7.5	7
Buckinghamshire	Shabbington	Wigod	-	10	10
Buckinghamshire	Waddesdon	Beorhtric	-	27	30
Gloucestershire	Alderley	Wigod	-	1	5
Gloucestershire	Brawn	Wigod and Ealdred	-	1.5	1.5
Oxfordshire	Aston Rowant	Wulfstan and Ælfric (one virgate)	-	20.25	20
Oxfordshire	Chalgrove	Thorkil	-	10	12
Oxfordshire	Gatehampton	Wigod	-	5	4
Oxfordshire	Haseley	Queen Edith	-	16	15
Oxfordshire	Kingston Blount	-	-	7	7
Oxfordshire	Mapledurham	-	-	3	7
Oxfordshire	Newham Murren	Engelric	-	10	12
Oxfordshire	North Stoke	Eadwine	-	10	15
Oxfordshire	Rothfield Peppard	Wulfric	-	5	10
Oxfordshire	Whitchurch	Leofric and Alwine	-	10	20
Surrey	Chessington	Magni Svrt	-	5	3.5

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Wiltshire	Ogbourne	Earl Harold	-	10	15
Wiltshire	Wootton Bassett	Leofnoth	-	12	9
Total				183.4	232.5
<u>Enfeoffed Estates</u>					
Bedfordshire	Thurleigh	Leofric	Leofric	0.25	0.5
Berkshire	? Langley in Tilehurst	Leofweard	Leofweard	1	0
Berkshire	Appleton	Healfdene	Richard	5	3
Berkshire	Betterton	Leofric the monk	William	10	3
Berkshire	Clapcot in Wallingford	Seaxfrith	Harold	7	5
Berkshire	Eaton	Bosi	Alfred	5	3.5
Berkshire	Eaton	Healfdene	Richard	5	2.5
Berkshire	Pangbourne	Baldwin	William	6.25	4
Berkshire	Sulham	Baldwin	William	1	1.5
Buckinghamshire	`Shortley	2 thegns	2 men	1	0.5
Buckinghamshire	Addington	Leofwig	Eadwulf	0.5	0.5
Buckinghamshire	Ashendon	Viking	Viking	2	1.5
Buckinghamshire	Aston Sandford	Coleman	2 men	0.25	0.5
Buckinghamshire	Aston Sandford	Wulfric	2 men	0.25	0.5
Buckinghamshire	Beachendon	1 man	2 men	1	0.625
Buckinghamshire	Beachendon	1 man	2 men	1	0.625
Buckinghamshire	Botolph Claydon	2 Englishmen	2 Englishmen	2	1
Buckinghamshire	Botolph Claydon and East Claydon	-	Geoffrey	7.75	4
Buckinghamshire	Bradwell	Godwine	William	1.375	1
Buckinghamshire	Bradwell	Sibbi	William	1.375	1
Buckinghamshire	Chearsley	Healfdene	Richard	1.5	1.1
Buckinghamshire	Dorney	Ealdræd	Ralph	3	1.5
Buckinghamshire	Hardwick	Oswulf	William	1	1

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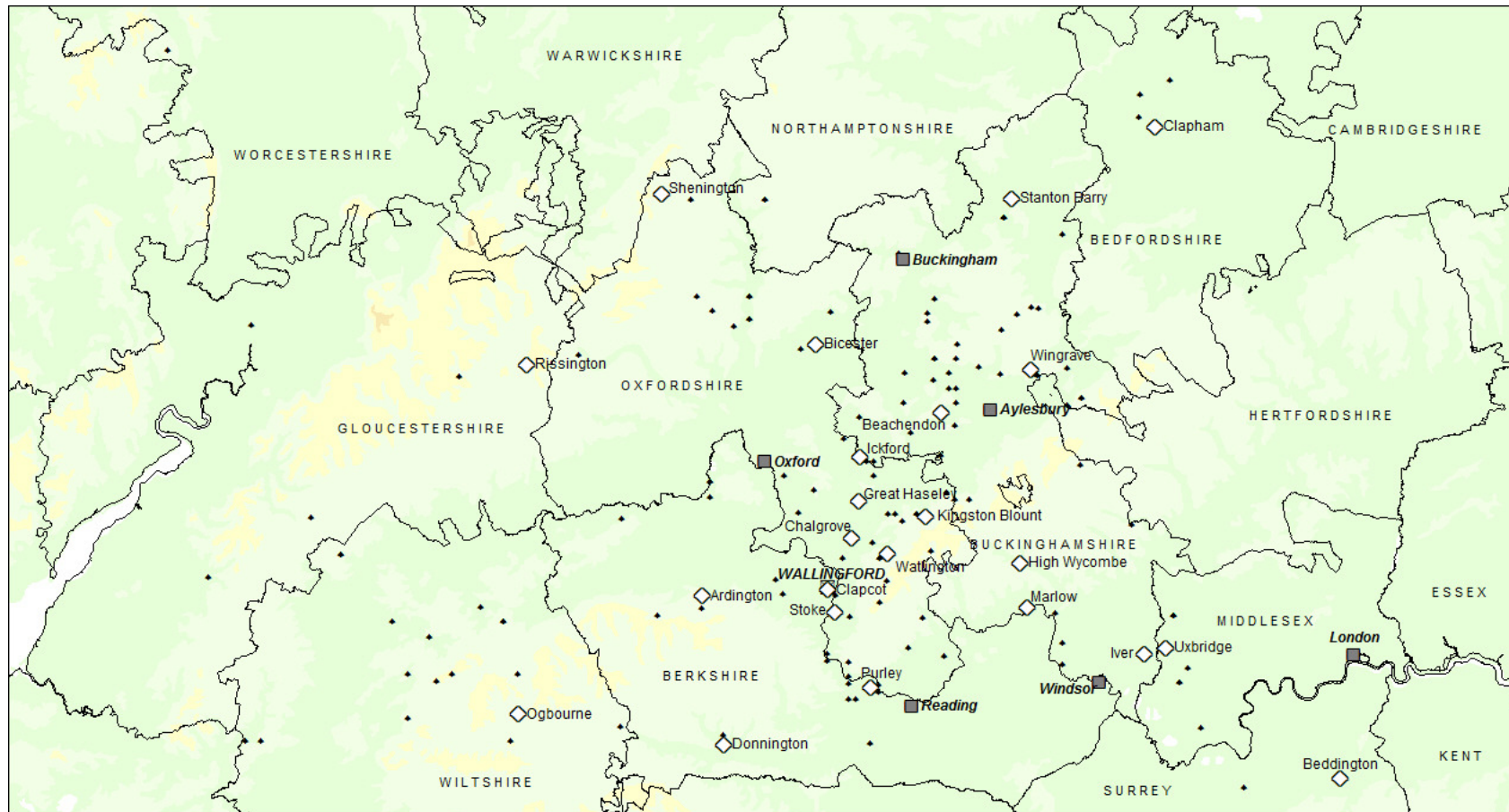
Buckinghamshire	Hitcham	Hemming	Ralph	6	4
Buckinghamshire	Hollington	1 man	Nigel	0.25	0.15
Buckinghamshire	Horton	Leofsige	Swarting	1	0.667
Buckinghamshire	Ickford	-	Richard	4	4
Buckinghamshire	Littlecote	Herch	Robert	1	0.75
Buckinghamshire	Lower and Upper Burston	Oswulf	William	0.75	0.75
Buckinghamshire	Marlow and Little Marlow	Hemming	Ralph	8.5	3
Buckinghamshire	North Marston	Særic	Særic	1	1
Buckinghamshire	Pitstone	Leofsige	Roger	5	1.5
Buckinghamshire	Pitstone	Leofsige	Swærtung	2	0.5
Buckinghamshire	Saunderton	Alric	Osbert	5	5
Buckinghamshire	Soulbury	Almær	Roger	1.375	1
Buckinghamshire	Stantonbury	Bisi	Ralph	5	6
Buckinghamshire	Stewkley	Beorhtric	Nigel	3.5	4
Buckinghamshire	Upton	Alric	Alric	1.5	1
Buckinghamshire	Wavendon	Ordwig	Almær	1	0.5
Buckinghamshire	Wingrave	Beorhtric	Nigel	5	5
Buckinghamshire	Wingrave	Almær	Almær	2	2
Buckinghamshire	Wingrave	Leofmær	Turstin	0.5	0.5
Gloucestershire	Cherington	Hemming	Geoffrey	2	4
Oxfordshire	Adwell	Wulfstan	William	3	6
Oxfordshire	Alkerton	-	Richard	6	4
Oxfordshire	Berrick Salome	Ordgar	Ordgar	4	4
Oxfordshire	Britwell Salome	Wulfstan	Amalric	5	3
Oxfordshire	Britwell Salome	-	William	1	0.5
Oxfordshire	Chesterton	Wigod	William	12	10
Oxfordshire	Cowley	Toli	Toli	1.575	1
Oxfordshire	Cuxham	Wigod	Alfred	5	6
Oxfordshire	Draycot	-	Richard	2.25	1.5

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Oxfordshire	Gangsdowen	Ordgar	Ordgar	1	1
Oxfordshire	Garsington	-	Toli	1	1
Oxfordshire	Harpsden		Alfred	5	5
Oxfordshire	Henton	Leofnoth	William	8.25	5
Oxfordshire	Kingston Blount		Humphrey	5	5
Oxfordshire	Marsh Baldon	Azur	Geoffrey	10	5
Oxfordshire	Nethercote	-	Tovi	2	3
Oxfordshire	Somerton	Beorhtric	Reginald	1	1
Oxfordshire	Somerton	Ketil	Reginald	1	1
Oxfordshire	Swyncombe	-	monks of Bec	2.25	3
Oxfordshire	Thomley	-	Roger	0.5	0.25
Oxfordshire	Upper Heyford	Besi	Ralph	5	6
Oxfordshire	Wainhill	Beorhtric	Reginald	1	0.5
Oxfordshire	Watcombe		Geoffrey	2	1
Surrey	Beddington	Ulf	William son of Turolde	25	9.5
Wiltshire	Brinkworth	Toki	Humphrey	5	2.5
Wiltshire	Chedglow	2 thegns	Siward	1.375	0.5
Wiltshire	Chedglow	Siward	Durand	0.125	0
Wiltshire	Chilton Foliat	Earl Harold	Reginald	10	10
Wiltshire	Clyffe Pypard	Earl Harold	Humphrey	5	2.5
Wiltshire	Draycot Foliat	Leofnoth	Reginald	10	5
Wiltshire	Hazelbury	Leofnoth	Reginald	5	6
Wiltshire	Littlecott	Godric	Thorcytel	1.25	0.5
Wiltshire	Manton	Wigod	Reginald	3	3
Wiltshire	Rodbourne	Wigod	Reginald	5	4
Wiltshire	Walcot	Alnoth	Reginald	2.5	0
Wiltshire	Walcot	Leofnoth	Reginald	0.75	0
Total				279.7	200.9

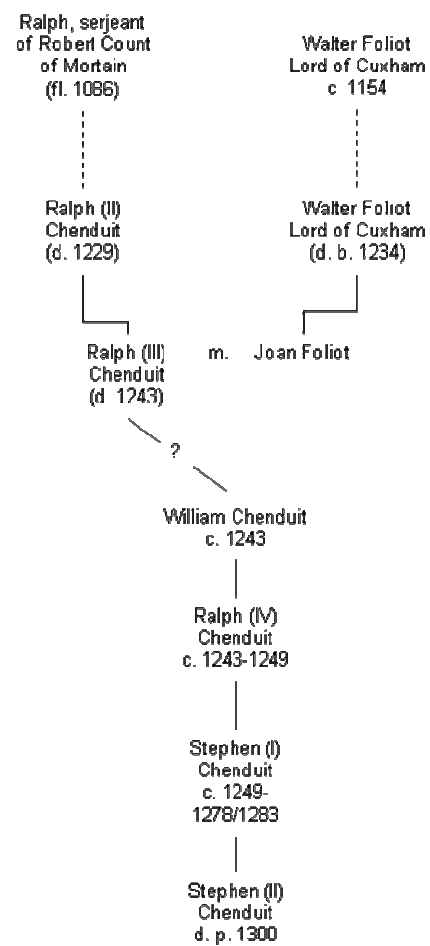
APPENDICES

Appendix 6. Map of locations where view of frankpledge was held according to inquisition post mortem at death of Edmund, earl of Cornwall, 1300 (Locations of views are represented by white diamonds, black dots represent other manors of the honour).



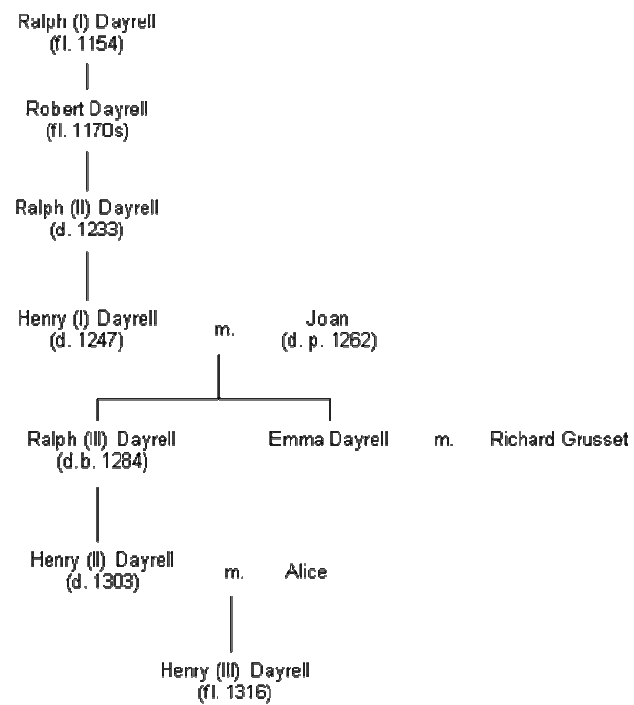
APPENDICES

Appendix 7. Chenduit family genealogy



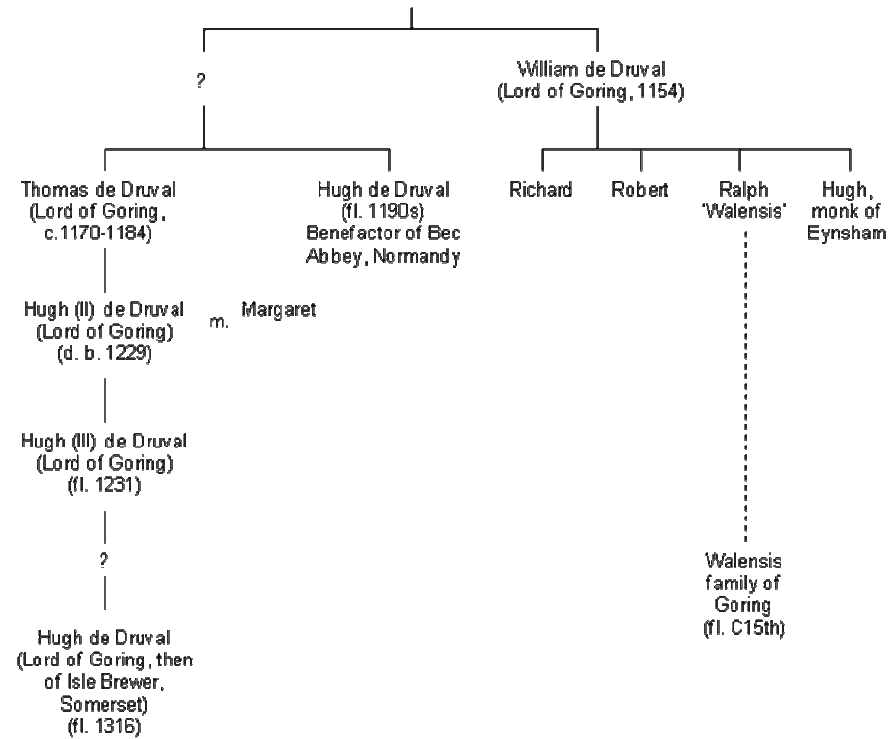
APPENDICES

Appendix 8. Dayrell family genealogy



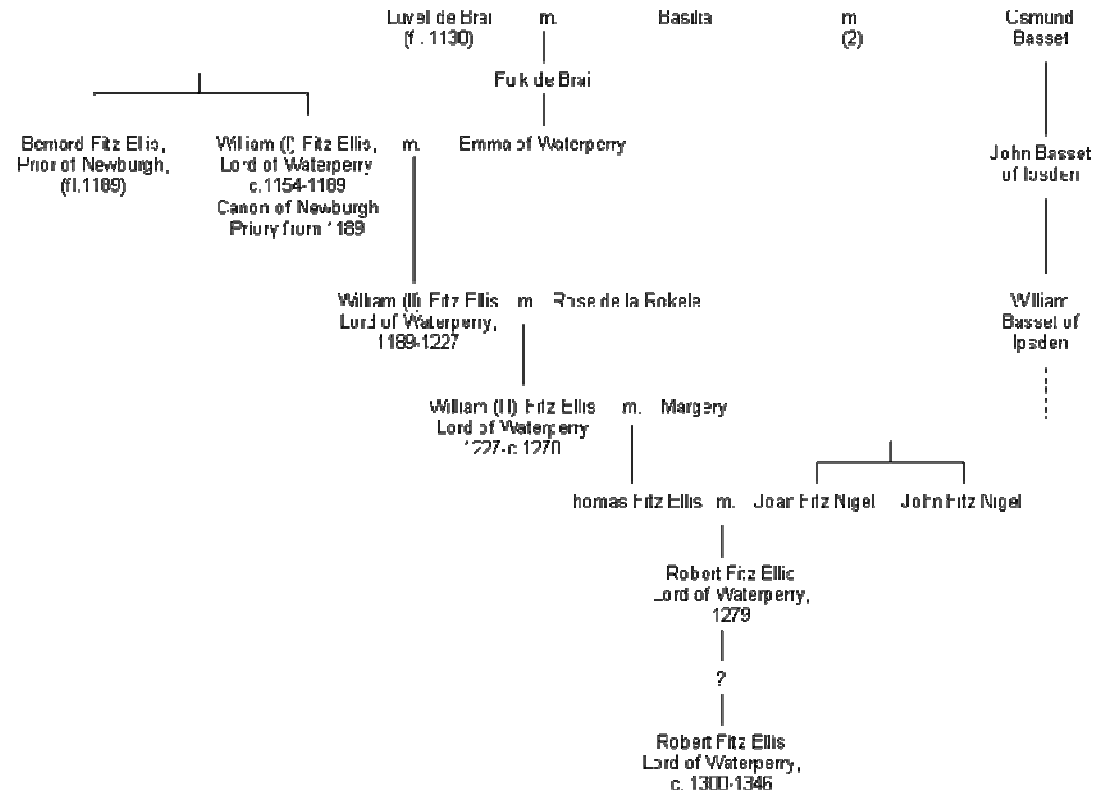
APPENDICES

Appendix 9. Druval family genealogy



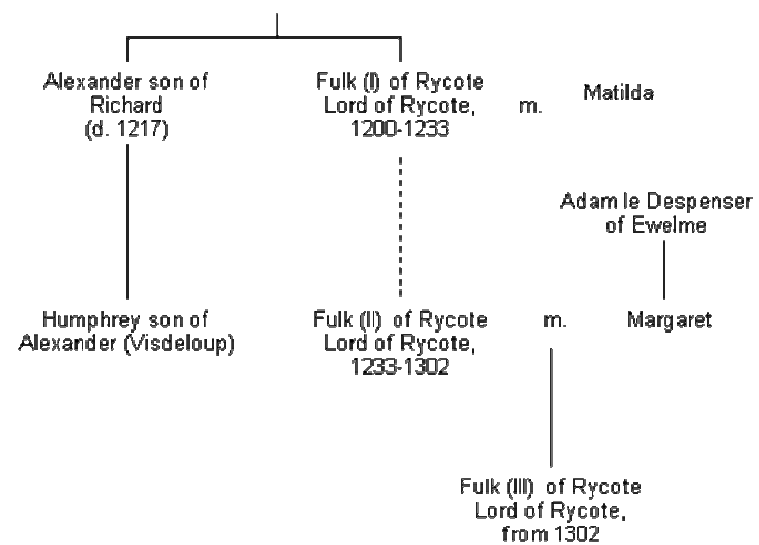
APPENDICES

Appendix 10. fitzEllis family genealogy



APPENDICES

Appendix 11. Rycote family genealogy



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Public Record Office at 'The National Archives', London (abbreviated to PRO)

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E 36/266	The Black Book of the Exchequer
E 198/2/6	Returns of Inquest into knights' fees, of 1212
E 372	Pipe Rolls
JUST 1	Eyre Rolls

British Library

Cotton Vitellius MS. E.xv (Register of Oseney Abbey)

College of St George, Windsor

SGC XI.G.1 (seal of Matilda of Wallingford)

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(with abbreviations used)

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